

Massachusetts weddings roll on
U.S. Supreme Court declines to hear challenge to stop same-sex nuptials.

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Don't forget your parents
PFLAG is often an untapped resource for LGBT issues.

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Meet the Flintstone
'Dance-Along Nutcracker' with Trauma Flintstone.

see Arts section



BAY AREA REPORTER

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Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities since 1971

Should ADAP, Medi-Cal patients 'divorce'?

by Zak Szymanski

Are you a registered domestic partner with the state of California? Do you or does your partner receive benefits through Medi-Cal, Calworks, or the AIDS Drug Assistance Program? If so, it may be time to dissolve that partnership, according to some concerned advocates who say that when the comprehensive domestic partner law AB205 takes effect January 1, registered couples likely will be assessed for need-based services upon two incomes rather than one.

AB205, by Assemblywoman Jackie Goldberg (D-Los Angeles), was passed in 2003 and grants state-registered domestic partners nearly all the same rights and responsibilities as married couples under California law. In almost all places where "husband," "wife," or "spouse" appears in the Cal-



Rick Gerhardt

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Jacques axed by HRC

by Matthew S. Bajko

Cheryl Jacques, president of the Human Rights Campaign, is leaving after less than one year at the nation's largest gay rights group. An HRC statement late Tuesday, November 30 announced her resignation, citing a difference in management philosophy between Jacques and the organization.

The Advocate.com, citing unnamed sources, reported Jacques's dismissal came after a conference call Monday night between her and board members. Sources told the Web site that the style in which Jacques handled key issues led to friction between



Rick Gerhardt

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Political battle looms over LGBT senior housing project

by Matthew S. Bajko

Supporters of an LGBT senior housing project are engaged in a zoning battle with the city's redevelopment agency, which they charge is stymieing their proposal. At jeopardy is the city's first senior housing community planned specifically for LGBT seniors.

The fight over the project is pitting gay seniors, Hayes Valley residents supportive of the project, and the city's gay politicians against Marcia Rosen, a holdover from the Willie Brown administration who is executive director of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency.

Mayor Gavin Newsom, who appoints members to the redevelopment agency's commission, also finds himself in the cross hairs. This week, he replaced Mark Dunlop, the commission's only LGBT member whose term expired in September, with Rich Peterson, a managing partner for Pacific Coast Residences LLC, which manages medium-sized apartment complexes for working families in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. With Commissioner Kathryn C. Palamountain's term also having expired in September, Newsom is being pressed to name an LGBT

person to her seat.

"Clearly, we need to have representation on the commission," said Marcy Adelman, president of Openhouse's board and a founding member of the organization. "We haven't been invited to sit at the housing table with all the other communities. It is time for us to come out of the cold and come to the table and for it to be understood we deserve to be there."

Who gets appointed could be the deciding vote on whether the commission allows Openhouse a chance to realize its dream or if Rosen and her staff prevail in excluding Openhouse from being able to compete for the property it needs to build its project.

"It has been disappointing to me that the executive director of the redevelopment agency, who prides herself on giving an early grant of funds to Openhouse, is seeming to throw one roadblock after another in front of this project," said District 8 Supervisor Bevan Dufty, a strong advocate of Openhouse who has committed himself to seeing that the project be given a fair chance. "The staff leadership is out of step with what we are trying to accomplish."

Linda Carlson, who became Openhouse's executive director in July, echoed Dufty in saying that the redevelopment agency under Rosen's direction has been less than helpful.

"That has been true, consistently, from the

beginning," said Carlson when asked if she felt Rosen has been putting up roadblocks.

Rosen did not return calls seeking comment.

As Brown's director of the Mayor's Office of Housing, Rosen gave Openhouse a \$20,000 grant to help with its predevelopment work.

Land needed

Openhouse, formerly called Rainbow Adult Community Housing, envisions building a senior village with up to 310 units on two adjoining parcels in the Octavia Boulevard corridor. The land is available for redevelopment due to the demolition of the Central Freeway, and in its place, construction of a tree-lined, surface-level roadway.

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Jane Philomen Cleland

Gay judge sets tone for innovative court program

by Zak Szymanski

On Friday, November 19, a man stood facing the judge in San Francisco's Hall of Justice and promised, the next time he appeared in court, he would bring one of his paintings.

"What kind of painting?" the judge asked. "Abstract," the man answered.

"I like your abstract work," the judge replied. "Keep doing what you're doing. Let's have a round of applause."

The crowd in the courtroom broke into cheers.

Another man approached and complained about his living situation, but the judge encouraged him to set a good example for his housemates. "You have a good attitude. It's always good to see you."

"Well, I love going to court!" the man said.

"Well, we love having you," the judge replied, and there was more applause for another person on the right track.

Welcome to the courtroom of San Francisco Superior Court Judge Herbert Donaldson, or, more specifically, Behavioral Health Court, which meets every Friday afternoon in a courtroom on the third floor of 850 Bryant Street.

BHC is a first of its kind program that addresses the needs of people with mental health problems who, for a variety of legal reasons, find themselves behind bars. And from its inception to its current operation, the groundbreaking program has been

presided over by two openly LGBT judges: Superior Court Judge Kay Tsenin, whose vision was responsible for the court's creation about two years ago, and Donaldson, who has overseen the courtroom for about a year and a half, and who says that being a long-time active member of the gay community has helped him to empathize with members of marginalized populations facing criminal prosecution.

"That and the fact that I have 22 years of experience on the bench," Donaldson told the Bay Area Reporter. Donaldson, who is about to turn 78, officially retired in 1999, accepting periodic assignments to various courtrooms until Tsenin approached him about permanently taking over BHC.

"This is the first real effort at handling the mentally ill," he said. "We have a lot of mentally ill people in the system and a lot of them in the street."

With the exception of extremely violent offenders, people with mental illnesses are identified by BHC while they are in custody and given a custom program to fit their individual situations. Goals may include securing housing and employment, or attending support groups, pursuing education, and often, getting on medication.

Since its launch, BHC has graduated, at various intervals, 65 people, with only four people re-arrested for crimes, three of which were misdemeanors.

The court held its first formal graduation ceremony on Thursday, November 18, in the Board of Supervisors' chambers at City Hall.

"I admire the people here very much," said Deputy Public Defender Jennifer Johnson, addressing the graduates and their supporters. Johnson, who serves as counsel for BHC participants, said the graduates represented



Superior Court Judge Herbert Donaldson congratulates a Behavioral Health Court graduate November 18.

Jane Philomen Cleland

FIRST OF TWO SECTIONS

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Pennies for World AIDS Day



Rick Gerhardt

Tom Regan, left, a volunteer with the AIDS Emergency Fund, spends part of World AIDS Day Wednesday, December 1 at Justin Herman Plaza in downtown San Francisco helping third graders from Gordon Lau Elementary School in Chinatown turn in pennies that they had collected over the past year. Students and businesses from throughout the Bay Area dropped off bags of coins during the day. AEF hopes to surpass the \$118,000 last year's "Pennies for Change" event raised.

Minister charged over same-sex wedding

by Kevin Davis

In the latest battle in the continuing struggle to make religious service open to all orientations, on November 19 the Northern California governing body of the Presbyterian Church USA, in Napa, reluctantly filed a disciplinary charge against lesbian "evangelist-in-residence" the Reverend Dr. Jane Adams Spahr for co-officiating a same-sex marriage at a Unitarian church in Ontario, Canada last February.

Bellevue, Washington's the Reverend James Berkley filed the charge against Spahr, citing the Book of Order, the church's constitution, which defines marriage as "a civil contract" and a "covenant" between a man and woman.

In rejecting the charge, Spahr triggered a procedure by which the matter proceeded to an investigating committee. After deciding there was sufficient evidence for it



MGM Photography

Reverend Dr. Jane Adams Spahr

to become a case, the matter now proceeds to a pre-trial hearing with the Permanent Judicial Commission. If charges are sustained at that level, the case moves to a trial at Synod of the Pacific, which operates like a district appeals court.

If the local Presbytery JPC rules that Spahr is innocent, Berkley can file appeals all the way to the PJC of the General Assembly USA.

Berkley chose not to participate in the hearing.

"What the church is really focused on, if you're doing a same-gender union, you can't do anything to make it look like marriage," said Spahr's attorney, Sara Taylor, who herself was refused the opportunity to minister because of her lesbianism. "You can't approximate marriage."

In a same-sex ceremony, ministers are discouraged from using language like "I thee wed" or "In sickness and in health..."

Taylor will argue that the many parts of the church constitution that argue for inclusion are inconsistent with the parts that are exclusionary, that the church cannot

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Correction

In the article entitled "Taking stock after hitting the big 4-0" in the November 18 issue, the job title for Bill Kirkpatrick at New Leaf: Services for Our Community, was incorrect. Mr. Kirkpatrick should have been identified as being a social service worker with the agency's outreach to elders program. The director of the program is John Land, Ph.D.

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Poster contest bares all

by Tyson Gillfillan

Over 40 artists, community leaders, safe-sex advocates, and neighbors gathered at Magnet, the Castro's gay men's health center, on Tuesday, November 30 for a reception unveiling entries and winners in "Open Up," a community-based safe-sex poster contest. A consortium of LGBT organizations including the sex club Eros, Magnet, the *Bay Area Reporter*, and social marketing firm Better World Advertising sponsored the contest, created by Eros owner Buzz Bense.

Bense developed Open Up to move past what he felt was ineffective, government-approved safe-sex messages and create a community-based dialogue on HIV prevention. Participants were encouraged to push the limits of their imaginations uncensored, in a return to earlier days of safe-sex messaging that promoted condom use in erotic ways. Many of the entries depict explicit images of gay male sexuality to capture attention, and, as one person said, "show safe-sex is hot."

Contest winners

Top honors and the \$500 first prize award went to Leonardo Herrera, a San Francisco self-taught graphic designer and photographer. His piece "Put It On" was inspired by his volunteer work for the Gay and Lesbian Historical Society, where he assisted with an exhibit on early AIDS-awareness posters.

Said Herrera, "Drawing on successful elements of mass media - quick slogans with hot images - my aim was similar to 'Just Do It.' 'Put it on' implies 'let's have sex' ... I wanted to make sex and safe-sex automatically the same thing in guys' minds."

Judges singled out Herrera's work as "sexy and provocative without being explicit." Copies of Herrera's poster have been printed by the San Francisco Department of Public Health and will be displayed around the city.

Other leading entries included a series by Nathan Nam called "HIV Cannot ...," ScooterX's comics-style poster "Personal Fitness," Stuart Goldstein's "Being in Love is Being Safe," and "Show Your Game" by Rony Liebsohn.

Nam's series, which took second place, was singled out for exploring the underlying issues involved with choosing to practice safe sex. According to Nam, his goal was to delve into why the gay community is still struggling with new HIV infections. Feeling the issue is more complex than simply urging people to use condoms, he said his posters speak to contributing factors that often accompany risky sexual activity, such as body image, relationship, and self-esteem issues.

In designing "Personal Fitness" San Francisco comics artist and illustrator ScooterX said he was bothered by the prevalence of "you shouldn't" and "don't do this" messages, and wanted to create a positive message reflecting that safe-sex is fun while giving gay men useful tools to prevent HIV.

Other top entries were recognized for being youth-oriented, ethnically diverse, and most importantly, thought-provoking.

"Very important," said Bense, "was seeing a clear and succinct call to action."

In addition to the \$500 first prize, other posters in the top five were awarded prizes including mas-



Leonardo Herrera's first place poster, "Put It On"



Nathan Nam's second place poster, "HIV Cannot ..."

sage certificates from the Immune Enhancement Project, a weekend at Fifes in Guerneville, dinner at Catch, and a movie at the Castro Theatre.

Viewing the posters

The Open Up entries will remain on display at Magnet, 4122 18th Street, for the next two weeks, and the top five will be shown through the month of December. In January the complete display will move to Eros, 2051 Market Street, and the top five posters will be presented to the health department for discussions on upcoming HIV prevention campaigns.

Organizers were excited by the



ScooterX's third place poster, "Personal Fitness"

interest in the campaign, and hope to have uncovered some local, fresh perspectives to enhance safe-sex messaging in San Francisco.

Reception attendee Steven Tierney, director of HIV prevention at DPH, said that many of the works on display were "absolutely appropriate for the department's programs."

While viewing the work he added, "Any notion that the community is lethargic about safe-sex is completely wrong. As all of these posters and the crowd here tonight prove, people do care a lot about this issue, and are developing new and creative voices to express that." ▼

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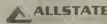
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News in brief

Compiled by Cynthia Laird

Maitri toy drive Saturday

Maitri, an AIDS hospice program in San Francisco, is hosting an event Saturday, December 4 to help children with AIDS in Asia and Africa. Held in conjunction with the recent World AIDS Day, the benefit toy drive was started four years ago by Maitri resident Peter Dalton and continues to grow. Last year, more than 350 new toys were donated to send to children in need. Dalton continues to coordinate the event and will be there Saturday.

The event is open to the public and takes place from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at Maitri, 401 Duboce Avenue. Beneficiary organizations this year include the Mildmay Jaja's Rural Day Care in Uganda; the Harare Children's Hospital Mildmay Center in Zimbabwe; and the Mercy Center in Bangkok, Thailand. Those attending are asked to donate a new, lightweight toy that does not require batteries or to make a suggested \$15 donation toward the purchase of a gift. For more information, call (415) 558-8003.

COLAGE bowl-a-thon

Children of Gays and Lesbians Everywhere will host its ninth annual bowl-a-thon Sunday, December 5 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Yerba Buena Bowling Center, 750 Folsom Street (between 3rd and 4th streets) in San Francisco. Unlike many fundraisers that center on speeches and pitches, the bowl-a-thon is a

fun-filled community event in which everyone can participate. It is open to all ages and abilities.

Meredith Fenton, program director, said people can participate by signing up at the group's Web site (www.colage.org/bayarea) or calling or e-mailing for a pledge form. Friends, family members, and others can sponsor bowlers for \$5, \$10, \$15, or more. Participants should collect their pledges in advance and bring the money to the event.

Proceeds from the event will help fund COLAGE's diverse programming in the Bay Area, which includes four social, support, and leadership groups for youth ages 7-22; special events for the whole family; and diversity education.

For more information on the bowl-a-thon, call Chris Connolly at (415) 861-5437 or e-mail chris@colage.org.

Election forum

Equality California and the LGBT Community Center will present a town hall meeting entitled "The Thin Blue Line: Successes in California in the Face of National Challenges" on Tuesday, December 7 at 7 p.m. at the center, 1800 Market Street.

EQCA's Geoff Kors and community center Executive Director Thom Lynch will discuss the important roles that local and state organizations play in building strong political movements, including the successes in California in the recent election.

Financial workshops

The LGBT Community Center

in San Francisco is hosting an asset building series to help community members become more financially self-sufficient and the first two workshops take place next week.

On Tuesday, December 7, Gabriel Paul will host "Designing Your Future: Without Money, Dreams Die" from 6:30 to 8 p.m. A \$20 donation is requested, however, no one will be turned away for lack of funds.

Paul is a registered representative of Woodbury Financial Services and works to create long-term financial success for his clients, with a special focus on the needs of gay men and lesbians. At the workshop, participants will learn about managing debt, saving effectively, investing in property, financial independence, and retiring on your own terms.

On Wednesday, December 8, Monica Di Perna will host "Preparing to Purchase Property, Including Your First Home" from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Di Perna, who holds a master's degree in business administration, will help participants understand what banks require when analyzing creditworthiness of borrowers. There is also a \$20 donation for this workshop, but no one will be turned away.

During the session, attendees will learn about how to improve credit reports, what assets you need or how much you'll need to save to purchase property, and what loan applications look like.

Both events take place at the center, 1800 Market Street. For

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Marriage case declined

By Bob Roehr

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday, November 29 declined to hear a challenge to the Massachusetts law that allows gay and lesbian couples to marry. The decision surprised neither supporters nor opponents of same-sex marriage and Massachusetts remains the only state in the country where such couples can legally wed.

The high court issued its decision without comment.

Die-hard religious conservatives had argued that the Massachusetts court decision mandating equal treatment of same-sex couples under the marriage law usurped the function of the legislature. They cited the U.S. Constitution's guarantee of a republican form of government, an arcane point of constitutional law that the courts have studiously avoided ruling on.

Most observers predicted that the petition would go nowhere. The federal district and appeals courts ruled that the parties had no standing.

"We're not at all surprised that the U.S. Supreme Court declined to weigh in on the state marriage law in Massachusetts," said David Buckel, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund's marriage project director. "The bottom line is that nobody is being harmed by the Massachusetts state law treating all couples equally."

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said, "President [Bush]

continues to emphasize the importance of moving forward on a constitutional amendment that would allow the people's voice to be heard and not allow this issue to be decided by activist judges or local officials who seek to redefine what is a sacred institution."

San Francisco City Attorney

Dennis Herrera — whose constitutional challenge to California marriage laws that discriminate against same-sex couples comes up for a major hearing later this month — called the challenge "a frivolous attempt to federalize a case dealing exclusively with questions of state law." ▶

Court says military recruiters can be barred from campus

By Bob Roehr

Law schools may continue to deny access to military recruiters because of the anti-gay policy known as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." And they need not fear financial retribution by the federal government, a Philadelphia court ruled on Monday, November 29.

The 2-1 decision by a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

overturned a lower court decision. It ordered the trial judge to impose an injunction barring enforcement of the Solomon Amendment, the legislation that tried to force the law schools to assist the recruiters.

The case is known as the *Forum for Academic and Institutional Rights Inc. v. Rumsfeld*. FAIR is an association of law schools and law faculty.

FAIR said that law schools

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Cheryl, we hardly knew ya

The stunning news late Tuesday that Human Rights Campaign President Cheryl Jacques was resigning her position – after less than a year on the job – is an opportunity for change in the direction of the nation's largest LGBT rights organization. While HRC board members have taken pains to insist that Jacques was not forced out of her job, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that the "difference in management philosophy" cited by the board is a clear indication that all was not harmonious at the organization. Jacques was hired by HRC in late 2003, after a lengthy search to replace longtime Executive Director Elizabeth Birch. We're quite certain HRC was planning to have Jacques stick around for more than 11 months.

Jacques was controversial from the start of her tenure. She's only been out for four years now, and while it was certainly a good thing to come out, Jacques, a former state senator from Massachusetts, was in the closet for much of her political career.

Jacques did lead HRC through the recent election and was actively involved in lobbying Congress to defeat the proposed Federal Marriage Amendment. However, HRC's efforts to pour hundreds of thousands of dollars into efforts to fight the 11 state constitutional amendments banning same-sex marriage fell flat; and we wonder if that decision was one with which the board became unhappy.

HRC's future direction is now very much up in the air, and early indications raise troubling questions. The board announced that Hilary Rosen, Birch's longtime partner and the former president of the Recording Industry Association of America, would be one of two interim co-directors (the other is board co-chair Michael Berman, a seasoned lobbyist). Rosen is decidedly in the "wait on gay marriage" camp, judging by her recent essay in the *Advocate*. In the piece, Rosen insists that "paving a middle road for people to walk down is not caving in" regarding gay marriage, and prefers a strategy that pursues civil unions. We have deep concerns that HRC's board is in that "go slow"

mode and that's unfortunate. As Matt Foreman, director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, wrote in the same issue of the *Advocate*, "[F]or better or worse, whether we like it or not, marriage is on the table now, and there's no taking it back."

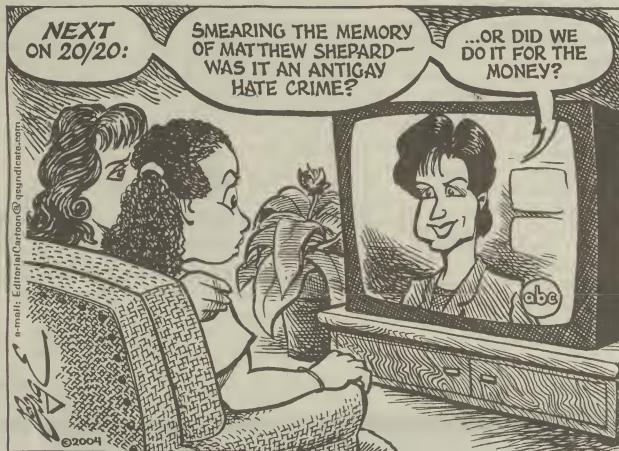
We also wonder whether HRC will now back down and reverse its decision earlier this year to include transgenders in the long-stalled Employment Non-Discrimination Act. While we realize ENDA is unlikely to be passed by the incoming GOP-dominated Congress, we're concerned that HRC may be wavering in its commitment to transgender community members. Rosen and Berman would be wise to reaffirm HRC's support for the trans-inclusive ENDA.

HRC has long been the more moderate of

the two large national LGBT organizations, however, we don't want to see it become more moderate and less cutting edge under its new leadership. Look at HRC's legislative track record now – it's zero in terms of ENDA and the hate crimes legislation. You don't get anything passed by condoning and endorsing politicians who advocate "going slow."

Our community shouldn't fold up and go home just because the GOP dominates the federal government. We need to keep fighting. We need to build up local and state infrastructures as we're continuing to do here in California and we need to keep the focus on educating the public – and holding politicians accountable. Caving in to those who want to let the marriage issue "cool off," isn't going to get us anywhere. ▼

Editorial



Why it is time to move forward

by Mark Leno

With a month's hindsight, there is great benefit for us as a community to review what recently occurred in our national and state elections and what it all means as we strategize our next political and legislative steps.

Immediately following November 2, we read the opinions of some who believed that it was our push for civil rights and marriage equality in particular that caused the defeat of John Kerry. In the following weeks, cooler minds prevailed as the facts were gathered and digested. As former state Senator Art Torres, chair of the California Democratic Party, responded, "It [marriage equality] was not the pivotal factor that defeated John Kerry for president in 2004."

With a marriage ban on the ballot in Ohio, Kerry came 3 percentage points closer to defeating George Bush than Al Gore did in 2000. The percentage of voters representing churchgoers was identical in 2004 as it was in 2000 – 42 percent. In fact, it was not a "morality gap" but rather a "terrorism gap" that led Bush to victory this fall. Nationally, 49 percent of voters said they trusted Bush to handle terrorism while only 31 percent trusted Kerry. As a result, Democrats lost married women and Latino/a voters in greater proportions than we did in 2000. Though the right wing tried to spin their victory as our loss, fortunately few bought it. Karl Rove repeatedly stated that Kerry's vote on the war was "the gift that kept on giving."

There are those who would lead us to believe that the sky is falling and that our collective LGBT fortunes have never been worse. Yes, 11 states did pass constitutional amendments to deny loving same-sex couples the right to marry but eight of those

states are deeply conservative and have never supported our civil rights. We were outspent many fold and did not expect different results. However, the voters in Oregon were much more evenly divided. It is of interest to note that in this one state where same-sex couples were actually married, voters gave the least support to the ballot measure.

The remarkable news of the exit polls is that 62 percent of voters nationally support some form of legal protection for lesbian and gay couples (27 percent for civil marriage, 35 percent for civil unions). That number represents a huge shift in recent public opinion. I believe these figures express a sincere fair-mindedness among Americans and a desire to end discrimination against our community.

Democrats in our state had a number of significant victories. Battling tens of millions of dollars and a popular governor bent on defeating Democratic legislative candidates, LGBT-friendly candidates prevailed in 12 of 12 races. Not only were our issues, including marriage equality, not a liability in state races, we know that in at least a handful they were of assistance in mobilizing Democrats to defeat antigay challengers.

My office has received many e-mails and letters from constituents responding to the news that we will be proceeding with the re-introduction of our marriage equality bill. Most of them have expressed their thanks and support. Others, though, believe this is a poor decision and a risky step to take. The concern is that we may provoke those who disagree with us and that our community could potentially lose a few of our recent gains. Some who corresponded believe that we can win all of our rights through civil

unions or domestic partnerships, which unfortunately is not the case.

We must acknowledge that the radical right is moving forward with its discriminatory agenda regardless of any actions that we take. Marriage is the best fundraising tool the religious right discovered since abortion. The objective is not to deny us our basic right to marry but to deny us any and every legal protection. That is why we must continue to fight. As we move forward, openly and proudly sharing stories of who we are and who we love, more people come to understand that the fact of our love is of no threat to their lives. We change minds and hearts by showing them that same-sex couples are devoted to each other and suffer serious harm when the law treats them as strangers. People are moved by the issue of fairness.

Our marriage equality bill clearly shows the existing inequity in the law. It allows us a rallying point and will prompt debate.

Through that debate we will describe how anything short of marriage will deny us over a thousand federal benefits and rights. We will make our case that we are deserving of first-class citizenship and nothing less. It gives us the opportunity to underscore that we live in a democracy and not a theocracy.

By discussing our lives in terms of dignity and respect, we will promote the full promise of our great democracy and our common humanity – our ability and desire to love another human being in an intimate and committed fashion. We are privileged to have this opportunity to speak the truth in the Golden State. ▼

Guest Opinion

Assemblyman Mark Leno represents San Francisco's 13th District.

LETTERS

Cautionary tale

After reading your cover article, "Gays assail ABC Shepard Show" [November 25] I went ahead and tuned in. It was mean-spirited and ill timed to say the least – as they bashed I recalled an article I had read a year or so after Shepard's murder. I looked it up online and re-read it. The hate crime case was slim even at the time, but we needed a poster child, wound-licking worthy. Chances are we were duped by the very same culprit we are only now demonizing via billboards in our village. I'm passing on the Web page and name of the article – it is a cautionary tale: http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m111/is_1792_299/ai_92907678. The article is from Harper's magazine: "A boy's life for Matthew Shepard's killers, what does it take to pass as a man?" by JoAnn Wypijewski, September 1999.

Bruce Jennison
San Francisco

Community shouldn't ignore issues

Actually, I saw the ABC piece and am a gay man and didn't think it was that bad, so I won't be complaining to ABC out of political correctness, as the Human Rights Campaign has urged.

I am a paid member of HRC and have been so for several years.

I am truly sorry that Mathew Shepard died and his brutal murder deserves punishment, make no mistake about it.

However, neither should the issues brought out in the ABC piece about crystal drug use, which is an epidemic in the gay community, and the closet bisexuality be swept away and ignored by our community under the guise of being PC.

Case in point: I signed up on Yahoo with an e-mail name containing some reference to being a crystal party and advertised on the local e-mail list for a three-way with my b.f. last Saturday night. Within minutes there were half a dozen replies with offers to bring over crystal.

I think HRC should chill out on this one and let ABC alone. I think we will need ABC later on when the antigay partnership constitutional amendment hits later in about a year or so.

Let's not get sidetracked from the focus of beating the antigay constitutional amendment and from cleaning up our own act of high crystal use in the community, which ABC was right to expose.

Sorry, this time I am not with HRC. I think too much political correctness all the time is hurting us and this HRC action is a good example. To win we need to get down to basics, not whine when the dirty linen of the gay community is aired in public.

Loren Meissner Jr.
San Jose, California

Bono should advance civil unions

I read Matthew Bajko's interview with Representative Mary Bono in your November 25 issue ["/Rep. Bono warns against rush for gay marriage"]. Bono doesn't believe in gay marriage. She thinks that civil unions are the "perfect compromise." I suggest that she take this idea to the House of Representatives. If she thinks it's such a good idea, then she should put her money where her mouth is and promote legislation to make it happen.

Quite frankly, I think it was a bit premature of her to remarry so soon after the death of Sonny. I am not ready for her to be remarried. Am I allowed to pass the same judgment on her relationships or is that only the privilege of our elected officials? Why didn't she just become the domestic partner of Glenn Baxley? She is risking backlash by exercising her liberty in such a selfish way. It shouldn't bother her if domestic partnerships are only recognized in the state of California. After all, it's a matter of states' rights.

If it is good enough for me, Representative Bono, it should be good enough for you.

Patrick Connors
San Francisco

Back off gay marriage

Gay marriage is a heartfelt, noble cause for most gay and lesbian people, however, politically, the LGBT community and the Democratic Party needs this issue like a pig needs a saddle ["/Time to ditch anti-equality Democrats, say LGBT leaders," November 11]. It appears that activist "leaders" such as Geoff Kors, Mark Leno, and Gavin Newsom, to name a few, rarely consider the number of states that also passed "backlash" legislation opposing critically important civil unions. These leaders absolutely need to take into account how many states will pass anti-civil union legislation in the 2006 election cycle; evangelicals are predicting 10 to 20. Gay marriage, if kept on the front burner, will provide fuel for this next disaster.

It is becoming very obvious that many of our activist leaders do not have the slightest clue regarding the opposition we are facing. They are funda-

mentalists, born again, "Super" Christians, most of whom are firmly convinced the current U.S. problems – war, economy, etc. – are caused by an out control Godless society. Gay rights and abortion are twin evils.

In order for Super Christians to feel their power and grow, it is critical for them to have an enemy. Guess what? The enemy is us. Racism, although alive and well in the fundamentalist world, has become very politically dangerous. Therefore, the LGBT community has become the convenient "safe" target. Why provide the Super Christians with political power? Beat them at their own game. Keep them guessing. Back off the gay marriage thing. We will be exceptionally lucky if we do not lose the civil unions already gained and end up with an antigay marriage constitutional amendment.

Outside of the very large metropolitan areas, most LGBT people do not agree with many activist leaders on the strategy and road map of the marriage issue. Some leaders have become very arrogant and out of touch with the feelings of many in the community. It's time to let this issue rest.

Joe Krizmanich
Emeryville, California

AIDS funds should serve people

As a person actively involved in HIV/AIDS prevention and care, I am astounded at the services being cut and the types of services and agencies receiving money that do not provide adequate direct services.

First and foremost, the services being cut are the very services those living with HIV have stated they need and want the most. The HIV Health Services Planning Council did several community-based discussions about what services people wanted and needed. How is it that services that serve people the most are being cut? And agencies that provide few direct services are getting large sums of money? How is it that the city is funding large consultant fees? I do not understand this. In this time of limited funding, we should be putting money and resources into services that consumers actually can use.

I want to know why Shanti is being cut \$730,000? Why is AIDS Health Project and its direct services being cut? This is money that provides direct services to real consumers who have mental health issues as well as those that are seeking assistance coping with life as an HIV-positive individual. I am also in awe that the San Francisco AIDS Foundation is receiving \$1.2 million. For what? The AIDS foundation has moved so far away from being an agency whose primary mission is to provide direct services. SFAF is a bloated agency with overpaid executives and managers. The AIDS foundation believes that it is a Fortune 500 instead of the community-based organization it was founded to be.

The three primary sources that the Board of Supervisors, the Department of Public Health, and the Health Commission should be looking to, when deciding where to provide services and where to cut (only if necessary) are first and foremost, consumers; second are the assessments made by the Health Services Planning Council's community input; and third is the HIV Prevention Planning Council's new HIV Prevention Plan. The prevention plan has a wealth of information in it. The link between prevention and care are now almost inseparable.

The bottom line for me is, listen to consumers and pay attention to which services people are actually using. Do not support and reward organizations like the AIDS foundation that are bloated with overpaid executives and functions as a lobbyist organization with a smattering of token direct services.

Edward Byrom
San Francisco

Thanks to Pilsner staff

I want to extend my sincere gratitude to the staff and patrons of the Pilsner Inn on Church Street. My brother Dave and his girlfriend Pam, both blind, came in with my partner and I on Friday, November 26. After an hour or so, Pam had a diabetic reaction, fell, and was unable to get up. The bar staff and several patrons were kind, gentle, and compassionate in getting Pam to her feet and to the next door taqueria for some lemonade and a snack, which made her well enough to take a taxi back to their hotel to rest.

Being from the Central Valley, both David and Pam came thinking the Castro was some district-wide sex club. They left thanks to the staff and patrons of the Pilsner – knowing the warm, loving community that is sensitive to the needs of even the sick and seriously disabled, that my partner Tim and I are very, very proud to call home. I'm sorry I didn't catch individual names in the chaos, but I extend my personal thanks to all the staff and patrons at the bar Friday evening.

Tom McElroy
San Francisco

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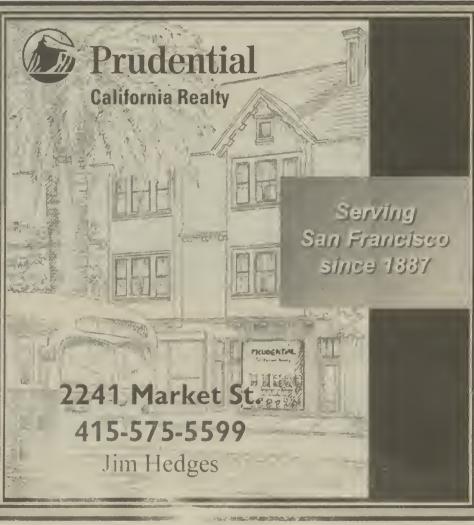
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The marriage-go-round

by Paula Martinac

What should have been the happy first anniversary of *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health* – the historic ruling on equal marriage rights in Massachusetts – was overshadowed by the recent crush of anti-gay amendments passed by huge majorities in 11 states. The losses of November 2 should serve as a significant wake-up call for our community and our movement, forcing us to realize that we didn't lay the necessary groundwork for such massive social change at the state and local level.

Since the election, a number of gay strategists have been urging caution, fearful that continuing an aggressive pursuit of same-sex marriage rights in the courts will only result in another flurry of public referenda designed to stop so-called activist judges from pushing gay rights forward. "All litigation can accomplish now," says Andrew Kopkind, a law professor at Northwestern University, "is to make people who are already uncomfortable about same-sex marriage more anxious and defensive." Indeed, the ACLU in Oregon – one of the 11 states that passed amendments – just dropped its marriage lawsuit to pursue civil unions instead.

But it's not merely defeat in the



Christine Smith

courts and the establishing of antigay legal precedents that activists worry about; they're also nervous about winning big, as in Massachusetts, because "we're unprepared for the consequences," according to Matt Coles of the ACLU's lesbian and gay rights project. What he means is that victories in the courts don't automatically change public opinion; in fact, they can cause a devastating backlash, hardening a lot of straight Americans against us.

In a way, then, right-wing commentators have been correct in their gleeful post-election as-

essment – America is not yet ready for same-sex marriage. But the operative words are "not yet." Public opinion is, in fact, a common problem for civil rights movements, with laws being much easier to change than people's minds. Consider that African Americans have been protected under federal law since 1965, yet racism continues to be widespread and insidious. Put to a popular vote, black civil rights are still on shaky ground – just four years ago in Alabama, 40 percent of those who went to the polls actually voted to keep an ancient, Jim Crow-era state law banning interracial marriage.

For the lesbian and gay community, then, there's important

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A final reflection on the election

by Wayne Friday

Have you had enough time to digest the results of last month's presidential election? Can anyone give me a definitive reason why, as one British tabloid so bluntly headlined it the day after the election: "How Could 60 Million Americans be so Stupid?" — referring, of course, to the votes Bush got in being re-elected? Hey, maybe it's time to get over it. I have to admit that I haven't yet (gotten over it, that is), but perhaps America has indeed gotten its "just desserts" in having to tolerate another four years of **George Bush and Dick Cheney**.

Unfortunately for those of us who voted for **John Kerry**, we have to live with it or "get out of Dodge," as it were. I've had conversations aplenty since November 2 about the election results and I have to admit I haven't a clue as to why some of those 300,000 voters in Ohio whose jobs were outsourced and can no longer make a living voted for Bush and huge tax cuts for the super-rich. I don't know why some of those with sons and daughters in Iraq, who they might never see again, voted for Bush and explained away their folly by saying, "I didn't want to change presidents in the middle of a war," apparently forgetting altogether who the man was that sent their kids to that war.

I guess I would have to agree, however, that the election result was less a validation of Bush's policies on Iraq, the war against terrorism, and the economy than it was the skill of **Karl Rove's** well-known campaign strategies. In fact, I agree totally that Rove was a master strategist. The Republican packaging of Bush was in fact so good that even some of the poorest Americans (those Bush cares about the least) voted for him because he was touted as being particularly strong against abortion and gay marriage — issues that they see as being so important that they will blindly vote for the man even though they know its clearly not in their best interest, economically or otherwise.

I guess from my viewpoint, the only good thing about the past election is the knowledge that two years from now we will at least have a chance of correcting the wrong that those voters in Ohio, Iowa, Indiana and other "red" states made, by, hopefully, electing additional Democratic members to Congress. Some don't want to accept it, but it was "moral values" (and you can read into that same-sex marriage, like it or not) that in large part drove the Bush win on November 2.

When the issue of "prayer pay-back" comes to the table after Bush takes his second presidential oath, you can rest assured those powerful Christian voters who put Bush across the winner's line will want something in return. Nothing ranks higher with these Christian fundamentalists than the federal courts, particularly, the Supreme Court where Bush likely will make as many as three appointments. A U.S.

Supreme Court that would overturn *Roe v. Wade* is number one on the religious right's payback list, with a constitutional amendment mandating marriage as being only that union between a man and a woman coming in a close second.

Having said all of this, there is one more thing I'd like to point out — 27 percent of those gays and lesbians who voted on November 2 cast their ballots for the Bush-Cheney ticket. Like, was **Mary Cheney** that appealing? What the heck is that all about? I guess the war in Iraq was indeed more important to those gays and lesbians than was their own civil rights — or is there possibly another answer?

I truly do hope our gay and lesbian Bush supporters understand that they bear some of the blame for voting against their own interests — their health care, the impact on people with AIDS, the coming collapse of Social Security, the failing economy, the rising deficits, and the ugly fact that American men and women are still being killed daily in George Bush's illegal war in Iraq. We can't point a finger at those ignorant straight Americans who re-elected this president when stats clearly show that 27 percent of the gay and lesbian vote went for Bush. Go figure.

Politics and people

After the December 6 biennial swearing-in of the members, San Francisco will have its first ever gay "power couple" in Sacramento with Assemblyman Mark Leno (D-San Francisco) taking his oath again as the representative from the city's 13th District and current state Board of Equalization Chairwoman **Carole Migden** becoming San Francisco's new state senator from the 3rd District. They are two very dedicated, bright, hard-working members of the LGBT community and both have even brighter political futures ahead of them.

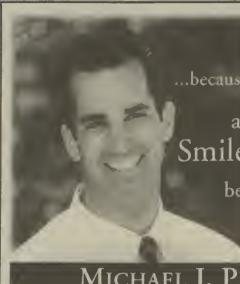
Meanwhile, the Republicans in the Legislature will have an odd political power couple of their own after December 6 when **George Runner** (Lancaster) takes the 17th state Senate seat and his wife **Sharon Runner** keeps her write-in bid to become mayor when incumbent Mayor **Dick Murphy**, a Republican, was declared the winner by 2,200 votes. A judge there refused to order that "empty oval" ballots favoring Frye be counted.

If the national Democratic Party is seriously looking for a new party chair they should look no further than **Art Torres**, California's very able state party chair. Torres is Governor **Arnold Schwarzenegger**: "The governor may have personal star power, but he proved this past election that



Political power couple Carole Migden and Mark Leno.

Marc Geller



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Who were Paul and Jane Bowles?

by Liz Highleyman

When writers Paul and Jane Bowles became the hub of a bohemian circle in Tangier, Morocco, in the 1950s. Looking back on their unconventional marriage, Paul once said, "We played everything by ear. Each one did what he pleased."

Paul Frederic Bowles was born on December 30, 1910, to a wealthy family in New York City. As a young boy, he had few friends, instead taking refuge in art and writing. He briefly attended the University of Virginia, but dropped out during his first year and left for Paris, embarking on a lifetime of travel. His frequent wanderings afforded him opportunities to meet literary figures such as Jean Cocteau, Christopher Isherwood, and Gertrude Stein. In 1931, Paul made his first visit to Morocco with his mentor, gay composer Aaron Copland.

Paul met Jane Auer at a party in New York City in 1937. Jane was born on February 22, 1917, to a middle-class Jewish family. She began writing as a teenager, and reportedly decided to pursue a literary career after meeting the French writer Celine on a ship returning to New York from Switzerland, where Jane had been undergoing treatment for tuberculosis of the bone. In her late teens, Jane frequented gay and lesbian bars in Greenwich Village and openly pursued affairs with women (and a few men), despite the consternation of her mother and aunts.

Although she later recalled that, "The first time I saw him, I said, he is my enemy," Jane and Paul grew increasingly close. They married on February 21, 1938, thereafter traveling frequently together and immersing themselves in New York's literary and music scenes. Although best known today for his writing, Paul originally worked as a composer, writing musical scores for theater, ballet, opera, and film.

For a time, Paul and Jane lived on Middagh Street in Brooklyn, in a communal house whose other

denizens included poet W.H. Auden, author Carson McCullers, exotic dancer Gypsy Rose Lee, and composer Benjamin Britten and his lover, Peter Pears. They later lived in a brownstone in Manhattan's West Village, where Paul occupied the top floor and Jane lived two floors below with her lover, Helvetia Perkins. Perkins later moved to a farmhouse near

Montpelier, Vermont, where Jane also lived off and on. There, she wrote her sole novel, *Two Serious Ladies* (1943), in which a woman leaves her husband after a prostitute introduces her to lesbian sex.

In 1947, Paul moved to Tangier, Morocco, followed a year later by Jane. Again, they occupied separate apartments in the same building. By the 1950s, Tangier had become a haven for western adventurers, including bohemian artists and homosexuals. Paul and Jane became the center of a community of expatriates and visitors, including Beat writers Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, and William Burroughs.

Inspired by Jane's novel, Paul wrote his best-known work, *The Sheltering Sky* (1949). While his music had been light and lyrical, his fiction was often dark and macabre, leading Jane to nickname him "Gloompot." Unlike Jane, Paul rarely included explicit homosexual themes in his work, with the exception of his short story "Pages from Cold Point" (1947), in which a son seduces his father. Although her friend Tennessee Williams described Jane as "the most important writer of prose fiction in modern American letters," her literary output was small. In the 1950s, she developed a serious case of writer's block, exacerbated by her addiction to alcohol and drugs.

Biographer Millicent Dillon describes Paul and Jane Bowles's marriage as "one of deep devotion, but not one of sexuality." "That we loved one another, and were deeply committed to one another throughout our 35 years of marriage, was a given," Paul later said. Although Paul recalled that he and

Jane had "some very good sex together" during the first years of their marriage, Jane was always more attracted to women (among them actress Libby Holman and painter Margaret Sargent). In Tangier, Jane fell in love with a young Moroccan peasant woman named Cherifa. Smitten, Jane gave Cherifa money and a house, but the object of her affection remained aloof. For his part, Paul typically engaged in brief, often anonymous, homosexual liaisons. He did have longer relationships with some of his Moroccan collaborators, including painter Ahmed Yacoubi, but he was circumspect about his private life; Burroughs joked that Paul's 1972 autobiography, *Without Stopping, should have been called Without Telling.*

In the spring of 1957, at age 39, Jane suffered a stroke. Her physical and mental condition deteriorated until Paul was forced to commit her to a psychiatric hospital in Malaga, Spain, where she died on May 4, 1973. After Jane's death, Paul became increasingly withdrawn, although he was beset by a constant stream of visitors. In his 80s, his eyesight faded and he could no longer write. He died of heart failure in Tangier on November 18, 1999. In an obituary, he was lauded as "the link between the 'Lost Generation' of Gertrude Stein and the 'Beat Generation' of Jack Kerouac." ▼

Liz Highleyman is a freelance writer and editor who has written widely on health, sexuality, and politics. She can be reached care of this publication or at PastOut@qsyndicate.com.

Suggested reading

Dillon, Millicent. 1981. *A Little Original Sin: The Life and Work of Jane Bowles* (Henry Holt).

Dillon, Millicent. 1998. *You Are Not I: A Portrait of Paul Bowles* (University of California Press).

Nutting, Cherie. 2000. *Yesterday's Perfume: An Intimate Memoir of Paul Bowles* (Clarkson Potter).



Past Out

Tessie's Thanksgiving



Nine of the 130 volunteers at Tenderloin Tessie's Thanksgiving dinner serve some of the 982 meals to area residents November 25 at the Unitarian Universalist Church in San Francisco. All of the food was gone by the end of the day, and many guests got to take home some extra meals. This is the 30th anniversary of the holiday dinner program, which was started in 1974 by the late Perry Spink, a.k.a. Tenderloin Tessie.

Rick Gerhardt

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BAY AREA REPORTER

One hot minute

by Jane Warner

C hevron gas station, November 25, 3:15 a.m.: A taxicab driver pulled into Chevron and got out to buy a pack of cigarettes, leaving the doors to the Yellow cab unlocked. After buying the smokes, the cabbie used the station's bathroom. When he came back to his cab, he saw his cell phone was missing from the ashtray and his tote bag gone from the passenger side floorboard. The cabbie frantically looked around

for anyone with his tote bag and asked the attendant if he had seen anyone enter his cab while he was in the bathroom, but he had not. Inside the stolen tote bag were his taxi permit, taxi medallion, and California driver's license. No suspects or witnesses were located.

Guess who

Hartford and 17th, November 24, 4 p.m.: While walking on



Hartford between 17th and 18th Street, a woman was suddenly startled by a man standing in front of her with a black ski mask pulled over his face. The suspect had a knife in one hand and pointed it at her. "Give me all your money," he demanded. Afraid for her safety, the woman reached into her pocket and handed the robber \$500 in \$20 bills. The suspect was de-

scribed as a white male, 25-30 years old, with brown eyes, 5 feet 8 inches tall and 140 pounds, wearing a dark checkered jacket and dark blue jeans. He fled on foot, northbound on Hartford Street.

Back attack

Citizen, 536 Castro, Nov. 26, 10 a.m.: A clerk arriving for work in the morning after the Thanksgiving holiday discovered the back door kicked in and the deadbolt unlocked from the inside. The clerk also discovered the office safe missing, which

contained about \$400 in cash. The clerk called 911 and told responding officers that the store had been closed for the holiday, but that it had an alarm. Officers discovered that a rear door alarm motion sensor had been activated at about 11:30 p.m. on November 25 and then again at about 6:30 a.m. on November 26, but because there is no access to the rear of the building it had been determined that the premises was secure. Officers took a report and notified the crime scene investigators. There are no known suspects. ▼

News in brief

◀ page 4

more information on either seminar, call Ken Stram, the center's economic development director, at (415) 865-5515 or e-mail

kens@sfcenter.org.

LGBT center holiday party

San Francisco's LGBT Community Center will host its third annual "Starry Night" holiday party and fundraiser Thursday, December 9 from 6 to 9 p.m. in

the Ceremonial Room at the center, 1800 Market Street. The event will feature music, libations, and a festive holiday atmosphere. A \$25 per person donation is requested, or a \$35 donation, which includes a full 2005 center membership. Those who pledge to donate \$25 per month will receive a gift bag.

Reservations are encouraged and can be made by calling (415) 865-5502 or e-mail events@sfcenter.org. Attire is business casual or festive.

DSCS seeks holiday donations

Dolores Street Community Services, which serves the working poor, people living with AIDS, and others, is seeking holiday donations from the community. DSCS operates the Dolores Housing Program, a 120-bed emergency housing and support service program for homeless men, primarily the Latino working homeless of San Francisco's Mission District. The agency also operates the Richard Cohen AIDS housing complex and a community center.

DSCS needs both financial and in-kind donations, said Executive Director Bob Nelson. He pointed out that a person can give a night of shelter at DSCS' facility and a hot meal for 10 homeless men for \$170.68. At the organization's licensed AIDS housing facility, a donation of \$188.21 will provide housing, wrap around nursing care, and three hot meals for a resident.

Additionally, personal hygiene products, preferably the smaller travel sizes, are much needed for DSCS clients, as are paper plates, plastic cups, and napkins. Nelson also said the agency could really use sheets and bedding (twin size) for the shelter and the AIDS facility.

For more information or to donate, call (415) 282-6209 or visit www.dscs.org.

PAWS gets grant for cat care

Pets Are Wonderful Support in San Francisco has announced it has received a \$15,000 "Partners in Caring" grant from the ASPCA/Fresh Step Safe Steps Home program. The money will be used to provide veterinary care, cat supplies, transportation, and foster care for PAWS clients.

PAWS helps people with disabling illnesses keep the love and companionship of their pets.

"For our clients with cats, the unconditional support provided by their beloved pet is invaluable," said Executive Director John Lipp. "The Fresh Step grant will keep our clients' cats healthy and well-cared for – and under our clients' roofs, where they belong."

The Fresh Step program rewards outstanding shelters and organizations across the country doing innovative work in the cat homelessness arena. PAWS has provided an array of services for 17 years, and the agency is dedicated to helping ill clients keep and care for their animals.

For more information about PAWS, visit www.paws.org.

Drama benefits SFWAR

Local theater company Sale Productions is currently staging a thought-provoking drama, *Extremities*, through mid-December and 100 percent of the net proceeds are being donated to SFWAR.

Francisco Women Against Rape.

Starring television actress Lisa Guerrero and San Francisco actors John Gale, Desirée Rogers, Laura June Bailey, and Alex Alexander, the play takes on every woman's worst nightmare – with a twist. During an attempted rape, a woman captures her attackers and proceeds to torture him. Her roommates return home and struggle to determine who is guilty of a crime, the woman or her would-be rapist.

Playwright William Mastrosimone's *Extremities* won the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Play and was later made into a film starring Farrah Fawcett.

Sale Productions, led by Gale and Brad Saget, is committed to providing Bay Area audiences with thought-provoking theater that is both strongly written and entertaining.

SFWAR provides resources, support, advocacy, and education to strengthen the work of all individuals and communities in the city that are responding to, healing from, and struggling to end sexual violence.

Tickets are \$25 and performances take place Thursday through Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. through December 19 at the Noh Space (part of Theatre Artaud), 2840 Mariposa Street, in San Francisco. For tickets and more information, call (415) 621-7978. To purchase tickets online, visit www.acte.org/go/extremities. ▼

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Robbery victim seeks help

by Matthew S. Bajko

gay San Francisco massage therapist is warning other men in the profession, as well as male escorts, who advertise in local papers to be on the lookout for a robbery and rape suspect.

"I want everyone to know what happened and to be aware," said the 45-year-old Japanese man, who asked that his name not be used.

A professional masseur, the victim said on the night of August 1 his assailant answered his ad published in the *Bay Guardian*. After several phone calls the assailant arrived at the victim's home around 11 p.m. smelling of marijuana.

Described as a white and/or Latino male, the man claimed to be from Brentwood and called himself "Rick." Once inside the apartment, Rick impersonated an undercover cop and pulled out a gun.

"The gun was sticking in front of my face. I got so scared.

At the same time he was using a fake microphone, like a police officer uses, talking to someone waiting outside. I was scared he was trying to arrest me," said the victim.

The suspect then used a rope to tie the victim's hands and ankles, then raped and robbed him. The suspect is described as 5 feet 7 inches tall, weighing approximately 155 pounds. He wore a denim jacket with a small collar, baggy jeans, a tight black shirt, and orange-tan baseball cap. He stole a camera, cash, watch, and kitchen knives from the victim.

"I am hoping if someone else had a run-in with this person that they would come forward," said the victim.

This case is currently under investigation and police are awaiting lab reports on DNA evidence.

Anyone with information may call Inspector Brian Delahunt with the Police Department's Sex Crime Unit at (415) 553-1361 or Tina D'Elia, CUA's hate violence survivor program director at (415) 777-5500 ext. 304. ▼

Court hears pot case

by Liz Highleyman

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday, November 29 heard arguments in the case of *Raich v. Ashcroft*, challenging federal interference in the implementation of state medical marijuana laws.

The case stems from an October 2002 lawsuit by Angel McClary Raich of Oakland, Diane Monson of Oroville, and two anonymous caregivers. Following several high-profile federal raids targeting California medical cannabis patients and providers – including Monson herself – the plaintiffs sued outgoing Attorney General John Ashcroft, claiming they feared having their medicine taken away and possibly being imprisoned.

After a loss at the district court level, a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals panel ruled in favor of the plaintiffs last December, agreeing that the women's use of cannabis for medical purposes did not fall within the federal government's constitutional authority to regulate interstate commerce.

The Ninth Circuit issued an injunction prohibiting federal authorities from taking action against patients or their caregivers in the ten states with medical cannabis laws, the majority of which are within the Ninth Circuit's jurisdiction. In June, the Supreme Court agreed to hear the federal government's appeal of the lower court ruling.

Monday's hearing, which featured extensive questioning by the justices, largely revolved around the issue of federalism, and what constitutes economic activity.

Paul Clement, arguing on behalf of the federal government, began testimony stating that illegal drugs exist within a national market, upon which even non-commercial distribution and use have an impact.

"Any little island of lawful possession," he said, would frustrate the federal government's goals.

On behalf of the plaintiffs, Boston University law professor Randy Barnett argued that the federal government has no authority to regulate non-commercial cultivation, distribution, possession, or use of cannabis that occurs within a single state's borders if that state has passed a law regulating medical use.

Monson, who lives with chronic back pain, grows her own cannabis. Raich, who suffers from a brain tumor, wasting, and several other conditions, is too ill to grow her own and obtains it for free from two caregivers who grow it for her.

ASA benefit Friday

To celebrate the milestone of Monday's *Raich v. Ashcroft* Supreme Court hearing, Oakland-based Americans for Safe Access will hold a fundraising reception Friday, December 3 from 7 p.m. to midnight at Pier 23 Café on the Embarcadero in San Francisco. The event will also serve as a homecoming welcome for medical cannabis "POWs" Bryan Epis and Keith Alden, who were recently released from prison.

Food and open bar will be provided; the requested donation is \$50. For more information call (510) 486-8083. ▼

– Liz Highleyman

Questions from Justices Antonin Scalia, David Souter, and Anthony Kennedy suggested that they were skeptical of the plaintiffs' federalism argument. Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg appeared more sympathetic.

Testimony also touched on the question of medical use, with Clement claiming that smoked cannabis presents a danger to health.

"When people are sick and people are suffering and people are dying," countered Barnett, "they may be willing to run the risk of these long-term harms in order to get the immediate relief."

Justice Stephen Breyer indicated that the plaintiffs should appeal to the Food and Drug Administration to reclassify marijuana, rather than going through the courts. "I guess medicine by regulation is better than medicine by referendum," he said, referring to the fact that most state medical cannabis laws came about through ballot initiatives.

Congress has consistently declined to remove cannabis from Schedule I, which includes drugs with no accepted medical use and a

high potential for abuse. In addition, the Supreme Court ruled three years ago, in a case involving the Oakland Cannabis Buyers Cooperative, that medical marijuana patients and providers could not rely on a "medical necessity" defense.

Following the hearing, Raich spoke to reporters at a news conference outside the court building.

"Without cannabis, I would not be standing here before you," she said. "If they decide against me, they will be handing me a death sentence."

A decision is expected sometime after the end of the court's current term next June.

If it rules in favor of the plaintiffs, the Ninth Circuit's injunction against federal raids on medical marijuana patients and providers would remain in place and apply nationwide. Should the court decide the opposite way, the legal climate would revert back to what it was a year ago, before the appeals court ruling. Medical cannabis advocates stressed that an unfavorable decision would not invalidate state medical marijuana laws. ▼

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PFLAG offers a voice in fight for gay rights

by Matthew S. Bajko

In the debate on gay rights, especially the question of whether same-sex couples deserve the right to marry, there is one voice which has rarely been heard – that of parents of gay kids. As president of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, San Francisco resident Sam Thoron is speaking up and out about the need for more parents of gay children to be heard.

And it is not just heterosexuals who need to listen. Thoron said too many times the gay community fails to tap into and hear one of its most powerful allies.

"In your community activism remember our voice, remember to call upon us," said Thoron. "We are an untapped resource."

Since assuming the role of PFLAG's national president in 2002, Thoron has tried to educate everyone from gays and lesbians to the national media and gay rights groups that the organization is more than just a support group or a yearly entrant in Pride parades.

"When people think of PFLAG they think of our block-long contingent in the parade," said Thoron.

Or they only see it as a place to send their parents who are having trouble accepting that their child is gay. However, since PFLAG's



Marc Geller

PFLAG's Sam Thoron says the LGBT community should utilize the group's many members.

first meeting more than 30 years ago in New York in 1973, Thoron argues the organization has evolved into much more than a shoulder to cry on.

"It is not just a support group for parents coming in who are crying," he said. "We can be a powerful voice for equality for our kids. Sometimes, someone needs to ask."

More and more they are asking and Thoron has been working hard to make sure they continue to do so. After serving one two-year term as president, Thoron was re-elected to a second term at PFLAG's national conference in October, held in Salt Lake City. Thoron, 65, has been with PFLAG since 1990 when his daughter came out to him and his wife, Julia.

Holding the conference in Utah epitomizes PFLAG's goals of fostering more understanding and acceptance for the LGBT community, said Thoron.

"It is a place that isn't the most welcoming," he said, "but we felt it was a good time to live our vision and mission by going to Utah."

With the state's voters asked to pass an amendment to Utah's constitution banning gay marriage, the gathering received intense media coverage, which Thoron said was "quite favorable."

The locale also served as the perfect backdrop for the launch of PFLAG's new initiative: "From our house to the statehouse." The idea is to organize the local chapters in each state into statewide networks and to use the combined energy and political clout of the individual chapters to lobby state legislators.

With gay marriage currently one of the hottest battles in American politics, Thoron said the strategy is needed. With the successful passage of Utah's and 10 other state's gay marriage bans this year, PFLAG is gearing up for new battles in other states.

"It is not in response to the election results but it feels appropriate considering the results," said Thoron, who began working on the new initiative this spring. "It is what we need to do."

A grassroots driven group, PFLAG is organized into individual chapters which maintain a high degree of autonomy and a national organization with an executive director based in Washington D.C. It is currently looking for a permanent executive director it hopes to have in place by early 2005. Since April, Ron

Schlittler has been acting executive director.

"We speak on behalf of our family members. Our work is about changing hearts and minds in and from the 500 towns we have chapters," said Thoron.

Piece of the puzzle

Not only does PFLAG work to change parent's attitudes, but Thoron said it also attempts to challenge LGBT people to educate their families.

"I think what we ask of the LGBT community is for you to push your family members to come out because there is a very large number of families who say 'You are my child, I love you but just don't talk about it.' We need to move that to 'I love you. The truth is you are fully deserving of equal rights in the United States and I will talk about that,'" he said.

Too many parents of LGBT children, Thoron argues, don't understand that they are the piece of the puzzle that is missing in the fight for LGBT equality.

"It is true that 'What will the neighbors think?' still trumps advocating for the rights of the child," he said.

After his own daughter came out, Thoron and his wife sought out the local PFLAG chapter to meet other parents with LGBT children. Having lived in San Francisco since 1964, the two considered themselves progressive, but not politically active.

"We realized she had not changed, she was still the same person. We just had new information about her," he said. "We didn't know another parent who had a gay or lesbian child."

By joining PFLAG and becoming involved in the leadership of the chapter, the couple became more engaged in the gay community's political struggles.

"We were not opposed to gay rights, but essentially, it wasn't an issue for us. It took our daughter coming out to realize she was at risk. It triggered a process of us becoming activists," he said.

Over time, Thoron said he came to understand his daughter deserved the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as her two brothers enjoyed. Since then, he has tried to educate others about the importance of granting rights to the gay community.

Last month when Senator Diane Feinstein (D-California) attacked Mayor Gavin Newsom and the gay community for pushing

page 23 ►



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Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any side effects or conditions, including the following:

- **Severe depression, strange thoughts, or angry behavior** have been reported by a small number of patients taking Sustiva. There have been a few reports of suicide but it is not known if Sustiva was the cause.
- **If you have ever had mental illness or are using drugs or alcohol.**

• **Dizziness, trouble sleeping or concentrating, drowsiness, and/or unusual dreams** are common. These feelings tend to go away after taking Sustiva (efavirenz) for a few weeks.

• **Pregnancy:** Women should not become pregnant or breastfeed while taking Sustiva.

• **Rash** is a common side effect that usually goes away without any change in your medicines. Rash may be a serious problem in some children.

• **If you have liver disease, have ever had seizures, or are taking medicine for seizures,** your healthcare provider may want to do tests to check your liver or check drug levels in your blood.

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SUSTIVA® (sus-TEE-vah) [efavirenz (eh-FAH-vih-rehnz)] capsules and tablets

ALERT: Find out about medicines that should NOT be taken with SUSTIVA.

Please also read the section **"MEDICINES YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE WITH SUSTIVA."**

Read this information before you start taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz). Read it again each time you refill your prescription, in case there is any new information. This leaflet provides a summary about SUSTIVA and does not include everything there is to know about your medicine. This information is not meant to take the place of talking with your doctor.

What is SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA is a medicine used in combination with other medicines to help treat infection with Human Immunodeficiency Virus type 1 (HIV-1), the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). SUSTIVA is a type of anti-HIV drug called a "non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor" (NNRTI). NNRTIs are not used in the treatment of Human Immunodeficiency Virus type 2 (HIV-2) infection.

SUSTIVA (efavirenz) works by lowering the amount of HIV-1 in the blood (viral load). SUSTIVA must be taken with other anti-HIV medicines. When taken with other anti-HIV medicines, SUSTIVA has been shown to reduce viral load and increase the number of CD4+ cells, a type of immune cell in blood. SUSTIVA may not have these effects in every patient.

SUSTIVA does not cure HIV or AIDS. People taking SUSTIVA may still develop other infections and complications. Therefore, it is very important that you stay under the care of your doctor.

SUSTIVA has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others. Therefore, continue to practice safe sex, and do not use or share dirty needles.

What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?

Serious psychiatric problems. A small number of patients experience severe depression, strange thoughts, or angry behavior while taking SUSTIVA. Some patients have thoughts of suicide and a few have actually committed suicide. These problems tend to occur more often in patients who have had mental illness. Contact your doctor right away if you think you are having these psychiatric symptoms, so your doctor can decide if you should continue to take SUSTIVA.

Common side effects. Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams during treatment with SUSTIVA. These side effects may be reduced if you take SUSTIVA at bedtime on an empty stomach. They also tend to go away after you have taken the medicine for a few weeks. If you have these common side effects, such as dizziness, it does not mean that you will also have serious psychiatric problems, such as severe depression, strange thoughts, or angry behavior. Tell your doctor right away if any of these side effects continue or if they bother you. It is possible that these symptoms may be more severe if SUSTIVA is used with alcohol or mood altering (street) drugs.

If you are dizzy, have trouble concentrating, or are drowsy, avoid activities that may be dangerous, such as driving or operating machinery.

Rash. Rash is common. Rashes usually go away without any change in treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. If you develop a rash, call your doctor right away. **Rash may be a serious problem in some children.** Tell your child's doctor right away if you notice rash or any other side effects while your child is taking SUSTIVA.

Other common side effects include tiredness, upset stomach, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Changes in body fat. Changes in body fat develop in some patients taking anti-HIV medicine. These changes may include an increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), in the breasts, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs, arms, and face may also happen. The cause and long-term health effects of these fat changes are not known.

Tell your doctor or healthcare provider if you notice any side effects while taking SUSTIVA.

Contact your doctor before stopping SUSTIVA because of side effects or for any other reason.

This is not a complete list of side effects possible with SUSTIVA. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for a more complete list of side effects of SUSTIVA and all the medicines you will take.

How should I take SUSTIVA (efavirenz)?

General Information

- You should take SUSTIVA on an empty stomach, preferably at bedtime.
- Swallow SUSTIVA with water.
- Taking SUSTIVA with food increases the amount of medicine in your body, which may increase the frequency of side effects.
- Taking SUSTIVA at bedtime may make some side effects less bothersome.
- SUSTIVA must be taken in combination with other anti-HIV medicines. If you take only SUSTIVA, the medicine may stop working.
- Do not miss a dose of SUSTIVA. If you forget to take SUSTIVA, take the missed dose right away, unless it is almost time for your next dose. Do not double the next dose. Carry on with your regular dosing schedule. If you need help in planning the best times to take your medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Take the exact amount of SUSTIVA your doctor prescribes. Never change the dose on your own. Do not stop this medicine unless your doctor tells you to stop.
- If you believe you took more than the prescribed amount of SUSTIVA, contact your local Poison Control Center or emergency room right away.
- Tell your doctor if you start any new medicine or change how you take old ones. Your doses may need adjustment.
- When your SUSTIVA supply starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to SUSTIVA and become harder to treat.
- Your doctor may want to do blood tests to check for certain side effects while you take SUSTIVA.

Capsules

- The dose of SUSTIVA capsules for adults is 600 mg (three 200-mg capsules, taken together) once a day by mouth. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower (see **Can children take SUSTIVA?**).

Tablets

- The dose of SUSTIVA tablets for adults is 600 mg (one tablet) once a day by mouth.

Can children take SUSTIVA?

Yes, children who are able to swallow capsules can take SUSTIVA. Rash may be a serious problem in some children. Tell your child's doctor right away if you notice rash or any other side effects while your child is taking SUSTIVA. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower than the dose for adults. Capsules containing lower doses of SUSTIVA are available. Your child's doctor will determine the right dose based on your child's weight.

Who should not take SUSTIVA?

Do not take SUSTIVA if you are allergic to the active ingredient, efavirenz, or to any of the inactive ingredients. Your doctor and pharmacist have a list of the inactive ingredients.

What should I avoid while taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz)?

- Women taking SUSTIVA should not become pregnant.** Serious birth defects have been seen in animals treated with SUSTIVA. It is not known whether this could happen in humans. Tell your doctor right away if you are pregnant. Also talk with your doctor if you want to become pregnant.
- Women should not rely only on hormone-based birth control, such as pills, injections, or implants, because SUSTIVA may make these contraceptives ineffective. Women must use a reliable form of barrier contraception, such as a condom or diaphragm, even if they also use other methods of birth control.
- Do not breast-feed if you are taking SUSTIVA.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that mothers with HIV not breast-feed because they can pass the HIV through their milk to the baby. Also, SUSTIVA may pass through breast milk and cause serious harm to the baby. Talk with your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You may need to stop breast-feeding or use a different medicine.
- Taking SUSTIVA with alcohol or other medicines causing similar side effects as SUSTIVA, such as drowsiness, may increase those side effects.
- Do not take any other medicines without checking with your doctor. These medicines include prescription and nonprescription medicines and herbal products, especially St. John's wort.

Before using SUSTIVA, tell your doctor if you

- have problems with your liver or have hepatitis. Your doctor may want to do tests to check your liver while you take SUSTIVA.
- have ever had mental illness or are using drugs or alcohol.
- have ever had seizures or are taking medicine for seizures [for example, Dilantin® (phenytoin), Tegretol® (carbamazepine), or phenobarbital]. Your doctor may want to check drug levels in your blood from time to time.

What important information should I know about taking other medicines with SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines, including ones for HIV, and cause serious side effects. Your doctor may change your other medicines or change their doses. Other medicines, including herbal products, may affect SUSTIVA. For this reason, it is very important to:

- let all your doctors and pharmacists know that you take SUSTIVA.
- tell your doctors and pharmacists about all medicines you take. This includes those you buy over-the-counter and herbal or natural remedies.

Bring all your prescription and nonprescription medicines as well as any herbal remedies that you are taking when you see a doctor, or make a list of their names, how much you take, and how often you take them. This will give your doctor a complete picture of the medicines you use. Then he or she can decide the best approach for your situation.

Taking SUSTIVA with St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), an herbal product sold as a dietary supplement, or products containing St. John's wort is not recommended. Talk with your doctor if you are taking or are planning to take St. John's wort. Taking St. John's wort may decrease SUSTIVA levels and lead to increased viral load and possible resistance to SUSTIVA or cross-resistance to other anti-HIV drugs.

MEDICINES YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE WITH SUSTIVA

The following medicines may cause serious and life-threatening side effects when taken with SUSTIVA. You should not take any of these medicines while taking SUSTIVA:

- Hismanal® (astemizole)
- Propulsid® (cisapride)
- Versed® (midazolam)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Ergot medications (for example, Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

The following medicine should not be taken with SUSTIVA since it may lose its effect or may increase the chance of having side effects from SUSTIVA:

- Vtend® (voriconazole)

The following medicines may need to be replaced with another medicine when taken with SUSTIVA (efavirenz):

- Fortovase®, Invirase® (saquinavir)
- Biaxin® (clarithromycin)

The following medicines may need to have their dose changed when taken with SUSTIVA:

- Crixivan® (indinavir)
- Kaletra® (lopinavir/ritonavir)
- Methadone
- Mycobutin® (rifabutin)
- REYATAZ® (atazanavir sulfate). If you are taking SUSTIVA and REYATAZ, you should also be taking Norvir® (ritonavir).
- Zoloft® (sertraline)

These are not all the medicines that may cause problems if you take SUSTIVA. Be sure to tell your doctor about all medicines that you take.

General advice about SUSTIVA:

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions that are not mentioned in patient information leaflets. Do not use SUSTIVA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give SUSTIVA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

Keep SUSTIVA at room temperature (77°F) in the bottle given to you by your pharmacist. The temperature can range from 59° to 86°F.

Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children.

This leaflet summarizes the most important information about SUSTIVA. If you would like more information, talk with your doctor. You can ask your pharmacist or doctor for the full prescribing information about SUSTIVA, or you can visit the SUSTIVA website at <http://www.sustiva.com> or call 1-800-426-7644.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

DP

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ifornia Family Code, "domestic partner" will also be included.

The automatic rights granted by the new law include legally recognized parenting of children, health insurance for partners of state employees, and community property, meaning couples have a 50/50 vested interest in all assets acquired during the relationship.

But such rights may come with

to figure out what we do, and how we do it."

Sutter said that the community should be on notice because after January 1, it becomes harder for domestic partners to dissolve their relationships.

"Right now they can do it through the mail. After the law takes effect many people will need to go through the courts," he said.

Kwong Kim clarified that some couples will be exempt from a lengthier, "divorce-court" type of dissolution, including couples

"We're still working on trying to figure out how it's going to affect benefits."

a price tag, according to Glennon Sutter, a former board member of the AIDS Emergency Fund who believes that state programs will view domestic partners as spouses with joint incomes, and any person on ADAP, Medi-Cal, or other need-based programs could be denied benefits if his or her partner's income is too high.

"The programs could look at someone's partner - who may still be working and making \$100,000 a year - and could assess that income together," said Sutter, who acknowledged that high-income earners should indeed finance their partners' health needs "if they were in fact married. But they aren't. They don't get all the financial benefits of marriage."

"They don't automatically get their partner's health insurance, for instance, which would cover much of their medical costs, and they don't receive their partner's Social Security in the event of their death. Some people think it's the same thing as marriage, or that it's something they should definitely do. But it may not be for everybody."

Without all the financial benefits of marriage to mitigate health costs, LGBT couples could suffer, said Sutter, noting that if someone is rejected from programs like Medi-Cal and ADAP, "AIDS drugs and medical bills can run several thousand dollars a month," he said. "People could go into serious debt. They could lose their homes."

Others, however, including those who helped to craft and pass the legislation, aren't so sure that couples will be treated as spouses for the purposes of income assessment. That's because these state programs are also federally mandated and/or funded, and as such, may be required to adhere to federal law, which does not recognize domestic partnerships.

"Whether in the eligibility review they will have to look at a domestic partner's income as part of individual eligibility, is not a certain thing. The state agencies don't yet know if that's the case," said Sophia Kwong Kim, legislative director for Goldberg. "These are state programs, but they are also federally-run programs, and the federal government does not recognize domestic partnerships."

Robert Miller, spokesman for the California Health and Human Services Agency, confirmed that the analysis of AB205's effect on assistance programs is not yet complete.

"We're still working on trying to figure out how it's going to affect benefits," said Miller, who was hopeful that the agencies would have an answer by the end of the year. "Where there is federal funding in a program, there is interplay with federal rules. So we're trying

money," said Sutter, noting that each person would already have been deemed lower-income and eligible. Other couples with incomes only slightly higher than Medi-Cal eligibility may find it's worth it to lose some assets rather than their partnership. Domestic partnership, after all, does do other things for people on Medi-Cal or ADAP: it automatically grants hospital visitation, for instance, and protects families in the event of one partner's death. So, too, does a will, said Sutter, who added that couples who are potentially affected need to evaluate their situations before making a decision about registering or dissolving a partnership.

An upcoming public forum on AB205 may be helpful; sponsored by a variety of LGBT legal and family groups, a question and answer session will be held on Saturday, December 4, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the LGBT Community Center, 1800 Market Street. A panel of lawyers and other speakers will address legal and tax consequences of entering into a registered domestic partnership, whether to dissolve a partnership, and other issues. Suggested donation for the event is \$3, which includes refreshments. ▼



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Senior housing

◀ page 1

Openhouse's \$30 million development would sit near the LGBT Community Center and be the first-of-its-kind in the nation. It would be welcoming of heterosexual seniors and plans to offer supportive services not only to its residents but to seniors living in the neighborhood.

In order to build the project, Openhouse must first acquire the land, which is controlled by two different government entities. The first piece, dubbed parcel P, is owned by the city and under the authority of the Mayor's Office of Housing. The city is expected to auction off the lot, which is estimated to cost \$7 to \$10 million, in order to help pay for constructing the new boulevard.

Openhouse has raised \$1 million in order to pay for the predevelopment work needed to devise



Supervisor Bevan Dufty.

Rick Gerharter

and plan its project. Once it is assured that it can compete for the parcels, the nonprofit has donors ready to give money to the project and the political backing lined up to tap into government funds, said Carlson.

"The fundraising will really focus on securing the land and

raising the money to build the village itself. We have a number of donors and foundations, and the state of California and the Mayor's Office of Housing, saying, 'we will be there when you are able to secure the land,'" she said.

Openhouse staff and Dufty met with Matt Franklin, director of the mayor's office, Wednesday to discuss their project and desire for parcel P.

The second lot, named parcel O, is owned by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and is designated to be used for affordable housing. However, the agency's staff has thrown a wrench in Openhouse's ability to compete for the parcel. The agency has proposed that the 36,000 square foot lot at Fell and Laguna be set aside for affordable family housing, not senior housing.

During a workshop about the zoning proposal at the commission's November 16 meeting, agency staff explained that due to two other parcels being designated for senior housing, they have decided to set aside parcel O for the family housing. However, Rosen stated that no final decisions have been made about the parcel's zoning.

"The agency could designate that parcel for seniors. This is a workshop. No decision is being made. We will continue to work with community groups," Rosen told the commissioners according to a tape of the meeting provided to the *Bay Area Reporter*.

However, at a meeting the agency called for with Openhouse this fall, Carlson said the agency's staff informed her that they would recommend the land not be zoned for senior housing and that the attitude over the zoning dispute was "let the games begin."

In response, Carlson said

Openhouse is launching an "aggressive campaign to secure that land" on numerous fronts. Along with the backing of Dufty and District 9 Supervisor Tom Ammiano, who won re-election last month, state politicians Assemblyman Mark Leno (D-San Francisco) and Senator-elect Carole Migden (D-San Francisco) are also powerful backers of the project. District 5 Supervisor-elect Ross Mirkarimi has also indicated his support of the project, said Carlson.

Leno sent the commissioners a letter urging them to reconsider parcel O's designation and expressing disappointment with the agency's staff.

"I am disappointed to see the needs of the senior LGBT community were not addressed in your report," wrote Leno. "Parcel O represents an opportunity for the agency to provide housing to the LGBT community in close proximity to the heart of the community and the services they need. I urge the agency to include an opportunity for LGBT housing on parcel O."

Early victory

Openhouse won an early victory in its fight with the redevelopment agency when, over the objections of commission President Ramon Romero and Palamountain, three members voted to designate designation parcel O for senior housing at a future meeting.

"I think we need more senior housing," said Commissioner Darshan Singh, president of the San Francisco Council of District Merchants Association, during the November meeting, who brought forth the motion to discuss changing parcel O's designation.

Commissioner Leroy King, the past Northern Regional Director of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, agreed with Singh, saying that as an 81-year-old senior him-

self, he understands "there is a need for this. I will be there to support this."

King advised Openhouse and its supporters not to give up their fight and saw no need to wait on discussing parcel O's zoning.

"I am not in doubt. I have heard these people and I was very impressed," said King, according to the tape of the meeting. "We should put this on the agenda, otherwise they will be left in the shuffle. I certainly disagree with our director."

The third vote in favor of the motion came from Commissioner Benny Yee, president of Benny Yee and Associates Real Estate Company. In voting against the motion, Palamountain cautioned there was "some danger in pushing this forward for a decision" and questioned whether Openhouse's project was financially viable.

"I don't want us to make an emotional decision we are not going to be able to backup with either legal authority or appropriate financing down the line, because, I think in the end, that sets you up for more disappointment," she said. "I would like to see your project come to light ... but let's go through the process."

Romero also stated that his objections to the motion were based on it being premature in the process when this was the commission's first workshop on the proposal. With commissioners Dunlop and Michelle Sexton absent, the motion carried on a 3-2 vote. It has yet to be agendaed on an upcoming meeting of the commission.

"This was a success for us but we are going to need many successes like this to prevail," said Adelman. "It is the fair and right thing to do to set this parcel aside [as a senior housing site] now and not designate it as affordable family housing. We are just asking to be able to compete." ▼

in the end the LGBT community would prevail.

"We put countless hours into community events, press conferences, fundraisers in scores of cities, hundreds of miles of precinct walking, endless lobby visits in Congress and statehouses nationwide and organizing of all sorts, not to mention the millions of dollars we invested for victory on November 2. Now in the aftermath, we may feel anger, defeat and, perhaps, even a sense of failure," she wrote. "I have one message: not a second of the millions of hours of work we've done was in vain. We lost a battle but we are winning the war."

From the moment HRC announced it had tapped Jacques to succeed Birch, critics felt the former Massachusetts state senator was the wrong person to lead the D.C.-based organization into battle. Many in the LGBT community felt Jacques should have remained in the Massachusetts Statehouse to fight political maneuvering to override the state's Supreme Judicial Court's decision to allow same-sex couples to wed.

When Jacques initially refused to disclose her salary offered by HRC, she only helped to flame criticism against her. Her critics had already raised questions about her short time as a publicly out elected official and her coming from a liberal, New England state.

The board of directors and HRC's foundation board will meet with staff in early December in Las Vegas for their annual winter meeting to prioritize the agenda and organize the transition to new leadership. ▼

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For more information about this forum or any positiveforce event please call 415.575-0150 x250.

STOP
PROJECT

Gay judge

◀ page 1

an entire population of people "who shouldn't be in the criminal justice system at all."

The well-attended ceremony included families and friends of the graduates, members of the Public Defender's office, the District Attorney's office, the Sheriff's Department, Probation Department, and service providers city-wide. But the stars of the show sat quietly on the side until their names were called and they were handed a rose and a diploma. With irrepressible smiles they acknowledged that they were entering a new phase in their lives, better

the better you are received."

Another client lamented that he was unsatisfied at his job, and the goals he set for himself seemed too complicated to achieve.

Donaldson advised him to meet with his counselors to set new goals around schooling and employment. In the meantime, said Donaldson, keeping a job was important because "we all feel better when we're working."

Even the man who announced that he had forged the judge's signature for one of his other programs was received warmly.

"You did what?" a wide-eyed Johnson asked her client who unabashedly told the story of how he signed Donaldson's name to a paper he submitted somewhere

"Yeah, I told him he ought to try Polk Street."

ter equipped to handle stress and to avoid legally questionable situations.

BHC has been commended by city officials for recognizing that jail has been the largest provider of mental health services, and that incarcerating mentally ill people can be counterproductive not only to their rehabilitation, but to society at large. BHC in effect saves the city money by preserving criminal justice resources for more serious offenders. The program also receives no operational funding of its own, using instead the energies of staff members from city departments, who also benefit from being able to work on such cases in a more focused manner.

BHC participants are clients, not defendants, and their progress is measured in how well they adhere to their plans. Much of the interaction that takes place between Donaldson and BHC clients looks like counseling, not punishment.

"I'm trying to be more conscientious about my hygiene and everything else," one man said during his court appearance last month.

"Yes, it makes a big difference in terms of how people react to you," said Donaldson. "The neater you are — and it's not quite fair —

else. "Well," said Donaldson. "Did they accept it?"

The challenge with most BHC participants, said Donaldson, is making sure they stay on their medications and finding and/or keeping them housed. From that place of stability, all the other possible goals around working, learning, recovering from substance abuse, and creating new social networks are easier.

Early organizer

Donaldson himself knows what it's like to have stigma, and to be wrongly trapped in the criminal justice system. He was integral to the gay community's earliest organizing efforts in the 1950s, when LGBT people, still considered mentally ill as well as criminals, formed and joined groups like Del Martin's and Phyllis Lyon's Daughters of Bilitis, and Harry Hay's Mattachine Society. In 1965, Donaldson was arrested during the infamous police raid of the New Year's Eve ball hosted by San Francisco's Council on Religion and the Homosexual. And as a lawyer who knew the late B.A.R. publisher Bob Ross, Donaldson incorporated the newspaper back when it was still typed, copied, and hand-delivered. ▶

He lost his life partner of 20 years in 1978, and lives on Castro Street "with lots of cats and good friends. Women and men," he said, emphasizing his belief in community support. "We have as much family as we will let ourselves reach out to."

Since becoming politically charged, the LGBT community has seen progress as well as division, he said, although the disagreements don't concern him.

"Any community, once they start organizing, will have divisions, but I'm really hopeful. For example, when the mayor opened up marriage licenses, that was a really unifying force in our community," he said.

Although he leads his "quiet life," Donaldson still has quite a few opinions about gay socializing. One favorite story of many involves a man whose incidents on the street resulted in a stay-away order from the entire Castro neighborhood, an order that was upheld by Donaldson.

"But your honor," the man reportedly complained, "that's where I go to meet gay men."

Donaldson, according to those in the courtroom, flashed one of his subtle expressions that indicated he did not approve.

"Yeah, I told him he ought to try Polk Street," Donaldson said. "In fact for a gay man cruising it seems there are a lot of areas other than the Castro that would be more satisfying. But I think he liked the venues there."

BHC clients "run the gamut" and many are indeed gay, said Donaldson, "but dealing with that is not their main problem. I can think of several clients who have been through the Vietnam War, who are homeless, and who just have so many problems that the sexual side just doesn't enter into it."

With every client, Donaldson said he invests in each one, and gets back what he gives.

"The most rewarding part is watching the progress. When a person first comes into the court generally he or she is in custody. We have to work out a plan, they get a case worker to help them apply for disability and find housing, and things start to turn around," he said. "It's not only satisfying, it's very fulfilling. It gives you a lot of hope for people."

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The growing risk of drug-resistant common infections

by Bob Roehr

The gay community is disproportionately affected by a growing problem of antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections. Many of these bugs, such as staph, strep, and various forms of pneumonia, are spread through intimate contact where the hardcore elements of sex such as penetration are not required, and condoms offer little protection. They can live on everything from doorknobs to wrestling mats and be picked up second hand.

Staphylococcus aureus, or staph, is a bacterium that can cause everything from a benign pimple to serious wound and blood infections to pneumonia. It is so common that more than a quarter of us carry it around on our skin or in our nose, but our immune system generally keeps it in check.

Penicillin-based drugs are used to treat staph infections. Bugs that have developed a resistance to those drugs are known by the acronym MRSA.

Drug-resistant staph largely has been a problem for hospitals and nursing homes, but over the last few years it has spread much more broadly. Outbreaks have been reported across the country, with the gay community in Los Angeles being particularly hard hit last year.

MRSA cases in San Francisco have increased more than three-fold, from fewer than 400 cases in 2000 to more than 1,200 cases in 2004 in just the public health clinics operated by that city, Binh An Diep reported at the Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy held in Washington, D.C. in early November. Virtually all of the increase in

infections has come from within the community, not in institutional settings.

He attributed the epidemic to "the spread of a single clone, USA300" that researchers at the University of California, San Francisco identified through genetic analysis of the staph DNA in September 2000. It appears to have evolved outside of the hospital setting and has spread rapidly across the country.

This is not some minor infection: "42 percent of these cases required hospitalization, they tend to be younger, and they are predominately male," Diep said. He added that includes men who have sex with men. The number of bacteria found at each site of infection is three times higher than seen with other strains.

In a paper published in the November 15 issue of the *Journal of Infectious Disease*, Diep and his colleagues said that MRSA has become so common that all suspected serious staph infections should be cultured for resistance to guide selection of the treatment regimen.

Recent reports have documented an outbreak of 10 cases among a football team in Connecticut where body shaving and "turf burns" from practicing on an artificial surface have contributed to the spread of MRSA.

Minor abrasions to the skin make it more vulnerable to infection.

"When the enzyme punctures its cell wall, the bacterium essentially explodes. As long as we can make contact with the organism we can kill it."

Making that contact is easy if the bacterium is outside the body, it can become more difficult once it gets inside. Fischetti said they can inject enzymes into the bloodstream and kill pathogens. But the half-life of the enzymes is so short, only about 20 minutes, and an intravenous drip is required to keep infusing the enzymes. And even then, they often do not penetrate well into tissue compartments.

The enzymes are very specific to the particular bacteria and their effect is a very targeted killing with no effect on other organisms. In contrast, most antibiotics are broad spectrum and kill off friendly bacteria including those in the gut that aid in digestion. This can result in side effects such as diarrhea or constipation.

One enzyme isolated from a bacteriophage lethal to anthrax was injected into mice that had been infected with the deadly killer. A single dose of the enzyme saved 90 percent of the animals.

Fischetti believes that one of the first uses of phage enzymes in humans will be to "decontaminate" the mucus membranes of people working in settings such as hospitals, nursing homes, and day care centers so that they are no longer carriers of the infection.

A mist containing the enzyme and sprayed into the nose can kill off the bacteria almost immediately. The procedure likely will have to be repeated on a weekly or monthly basis depending on exposure and the likelihood of them becoming recolonized with the bacteria.

However, it will require several more years of testing before the Food and Drug Administration considers approving these new approaches to treating infections. ▼



Researcher Binh An Diep.

tion and the bugs can survive on the carpet for an extended period of time. MRSA also can be transmitted by skin-to-skin contact and by sharing razors or towels.

Soap and hot water effectively kill the bug if you catch it early enough, before the infection sets in.

New approaches

The ability of these bugs to develop resistance to antibiotics has led to new approaches to therapy. One interesting approach builds upon an old therapy, bacteriophages. Phages are the microscopic natural enemy of bacteria, evolving over the eons to feed upon them. They were used to treat patients prior to the discovery of penicillin.

Vincent Fischetti, a leading researcher in the field at Rockefeller University in New York City, has isolated enzymes that phages use to punch holes in the cell walls of bacterium. In the test tube and in animal models the enzymes have been able to kill the bacteria almost immediately.

"The pressure inside a bacterium is about half that inside a champagne bottle," he explained.

Military

◀ page 5

historically have had a policy of nondiscrimination and over the years have extended that to include sexual orientation. In 1990 the American Association of Law Schools voted unanimously to add sexual orientation as a protected category. Today all but a handful of schools do so.

Beginning in 1994, Representative Gerald Solomon (R-New York) offered a series of amendments and then a law that first withheld defense department and later all federal funds from institutions that did not assist military recruiters.

FAIR argued that this impinged upon its freedom of speech under the First Amendment.

Writing for the majority, Judge Thomas L. Ambro agreed. Ironically, his reasoning drew heavily upon two Supreme Court decisions that at the time were seen as defeats for gay rights advocates.

One case is *Boy Scouts of America v. Dale*, where the court said that the Boy Scouts did not have to admit an openly gay scoutmaster because it would "significantly burden the Boy Scouts' desire to not promote homosexual conduct as a legitimate form of behavior."

Ambro applied that same logic to this case, writing, "the law schools believe that employment

discrimination is inconsistent with their commitment to justice and fairness" and should not be compelled to accept military recruiters.

The other case cited extensively was *Hurley*, in which a St. Patrick's Day Parade was allowed to exclude a gay Irish group from marching with a banner. The court found that the parade organizers had a right to associate with whom they chose.

Ambro called the Solomon Amendment an unjustifiably blunt weapon to assist the recruitment effort; "it could barely be tailored more broadly." The Pentagon has other less intrusive and burdensome methods by which to recruit lawyers.

Furthermore, "The government has failed to proffer a shred of evidence that the Solomon Amendment materially enhances its stated goal." It may plausibly be argued that it has generated such ill will that it "actually impedes recruitment," the judge wrote.

Judge Ruggiero J. Aldisert dissented vigorously. He supports the courts' traditional deference to the military, particularly in time of war, which is how he views the post-9/11 environment. He did not see that supporting military recruiters imposes a significant burden upon the First Amendment rights of the plaintiffs.

The Pentagon has not said so definitively but it is likely to appeal the decision. ▼

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NLGJA founder Leroy Aarons dies at 70

by Steve Friess

Leroy F. Aarons, the former *Oakland Tribune* executive editor who founded the National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association in his living room and grew it into a force in American journalism, died Sunday, November 28 after a 10-month battle with cancer. He was 70.

Mr. Aarons, who lived with his partner of 24 years, Joshua Boneh, in Sebastopol, California, died of

heart failure at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center in Santa Rosa. He is also survived by a brother, Ronald Aarons of Boulder, Colorado.

"Today, NLGJA mourns our founder and a pioneering journalist whose unending dedication has touched all of our lives," NLGJA Executive Director Pamela Strother said.

An accomplished journalist who spent 14 years as a reporter and editor at the *Washington Post*, Mr. Aarons sent shockwaves through the news industry in 1990 when he emotionally acknowledged that he was gay at a conference of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. That announcement, which came at the end of a speech in which he also unveiled results of a landmark survey of gay and lesbian journalists that showed most were unhappy with their professional treatment and coverage of gay issues, served as the catalyst for Mr. Aarons's formation of the NLGJA.

Never before had a top editor of a major newspaper come out so publicly.

"I had no idea it would be such a big deal until I was at that podium in New York about to say it," Mr. Aarons recalled in an interview at his home in October. "Other people knew it was a big deal, but I don't think I got it until the *New York Times* wrote about it."

Today, NLGJA has more than 1,200 members and chapters in 24 regions in the United States as well as affiliates in Canada and Germany.

Mr. Aarons and Boneh, a com-



NLGJA founder Leroy Aarons.

Rick Gerhardt

John St. Arno



John St. Arno passed away suddenly on October 16, 2004 in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Formerly of Detroit, New Orleans, and then San Francisco, he had been living with his partner, John Hall, in Ft.

Lauderdale for the past year when they had been remodeling kitchens and bathrooms. He is survived by two brothers, Daryl and David, one sister, Denise, as well as nieces and nephews, all of the Detroit, Michigan area.

While living in San Francisco he was a member of the SF Earthquakes gay hockey team that plays at Yerba Buena Ice Rink. The team will observe a few moments of silence after their game on Thursday, December 9.

In Ft. Lauderdale he was a member of the Hamburger Mary's softball team. He will be dearly missed by his teammates and friends.

A gathering of friends will celebrate John's time in their lives on Saturday, December 11 at 1 p.m. For anyone wishing to attend either the game or celebration, please contact Gary Arena at (415) 563-2636.

Mr. Aarons and Boneh, a com-

puter consultant, moved to Piedmont, California, in 1983 when his friend and longtime colleague Robert Maynard hired him as features editor of the *Oakland Tribune*, which Maynard had recently purchased. Mr. Aarons, who became executive editor and later senior vice president for news at the *Tribune*, led the paper to a Pulitzer Prize in 1990 for its photojournalism during the October 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. His sexual orientation was known to the staff, and he and Boneh frequently entertained other journalists from the paper at their home.

A memorial is scheduled to take place 2 p.m. on Saturday, December 4, at the main sanctuary of the Center for Spiritual Living, 2075 Occidental Road, in Santa Rosa. For more information, call (707) 546-4543. ▶

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Something in the air

by Jim Provenzano

The exodus has begun. Yes, a few gay couples have, like certain species of geese, begun flying north, instead of south. Seeking lands free of constitutional discrimination, the (re)election has brought a foul wind to their lives, and news articles report an increase in inquiries to Canada and other countries about expatriation.

Meanwhile, Young Republicans hoist tankers of ale, singing, "Tomorrow belongs, tomorrow belongs, tomorrow belongs to me!"

But this being the holiday season, never mind that, or well, anything serious. Celebrate our Great Leader's mandate and get to shopping!

Two exodus (exodi?) concerning fans of sports hunks: Landon Donovan and Gabe Kapler.

Having finally made it onto a team that actually won a World Series, the oft-traded Gabe Kapler,

Team SF meeting

Team San Francisco will hold its quarterly membership meeting Saturday, December 4 at noon in the community room above the Bank of America at 18th and Castro streets.

For more information, e-mail info@teamsf.org.

known mostly to gay fans for his musculature and bikini modeling rather than his RBI average, has become the first to quit the Series-winning, curse-breaking Red Sox for a possibly better-paying slot on the Japan Giants.

Oh, Gabey. You just made it big, after all those years we admired you in all your pulchritude, and now you're leaving? Was it something we said?

Let's hope this involves some sort of international trade agreement, and that Kapler might again continue his freelance modeling, perhaps even on a level of Japanese baseball export Kazuhito Tadano, whose previous "modeling" didn't harm his position with the Cleveland Indians.

Soccer fans also will bid farewell to another outsourced hunk, Landon Donovan. It seems Germany offered the San Jose Earthquakes' star forward a better deal than Silicon Valley.

The three-time national player of the year and captain of the U.S. national team will hopefully, like Kapler, find new fans around his underwear modeling.

Donovan will re-join Bayer Leverkusen, the German league club that in 1999 first signed him when he was merely 16. Oh well. We'll see him at the Euro Cup, no doubt.

Of his apparent mere visit back

to America, Donovan said, "Being in San Jose changed me from being a boy to becoming a man."

For more about the man, and his rabid fans, visit www.imabasustar.tripod.com.

For pics of Kapler at his best, visit www.JasonHoke.com.

Stinkers

What more need be said about the ridiculous brawl at the recent Pistons-Pacers basketball games, where Indiana Pacers forward Ron Artest punched out a few fans who threw ice at him? How ridiculous it was that he hyped his own rap CD during his appearance last week on the *Today Show*, claiming "it's all about peace and love?"

While some, Artest specifically, have said a season-long suspension is unfair, wouldn't it be fairer to have everybody arrested, like in the real world?

What worse example of professional non-professionalism does one need? Does the extra gossip that one of the beverage-hurling fans had his prison record dug up by tabloid TV shows make it any worse, or more stupid? Will it change the face of basketball? Will the NBA resort to cordoning fans off to smudge their faces against a plastic barrier, like in, say, hockey?

Cool breeze

Even with a National Hockey League-imposed lockout, you do know that you can enjoy local hockey in beautiful downtown San Francisco, don't you? The Quakes hockey team has begun its season competition. Bring a warm coat, but know the fans are warmly enthusiastic.

Upcoming hockey matches include tonight (Thursday, December 2), at 8 p.m., with the Quakes taking on archrivals the Puckheads. Thursday, December 9 at 11 p.m., the Quakes play the Prairie Dogs. Thursday, December 30 (also at 11 p.m.), they play the Misfits. The Quakes are now ranked third in their eight-team division. All games take place at the Yerba Buena Ice Rink, 750 Folsom Street, between 3rd and 4th



Take me out: Gabe Kapler says Sayonara, Red Sox.

streets.

Come cheer on the fastest gay team on ice! For more information, visit www.sfqquakes.com.

Fragrant Cologne

Last week I wrote about the annual Federation of Gay Games meeting in Cologne, but there wasn't room to mention some exciting results. Hey, if they're still counting them in Ohio over that other election, why not?

The Cologne election brought more Bay Area delegates into the fold. The FGG board approved expanding the seven-person executive committee with more at-large positions. Elections produced the most diverse executive committee in Gay Games history, including citizens or residents of Australia, France, Germany, Italy, South Africa, the U.K., and the U.S.

Among the new or re-elected officers is San Franciscan Charles King, elected secretary, who is FGG's first African American officer. Doug Litwin of the Lesbian & Gay Band Association, who lives in San Francisco, and Roger Brigham of Wrestlers WithOut Borders, from Oakland, Califor-

nia, were elected to the remaining at-large positions.

Susan Kennedy, a longtime San Francisco director and former six-year co-president of the FGG, retired from the board and was elected to Honorary Life Member status.

Three organizations joined the FGG board this year, including the return of two major international sports groups: the International Gay Figure Skating Union; the Gay and Lesbian Tennis Alliance; and an umbrella sports organization, Out for Sport (London).

The FGG also announced a comprehensive scholarship program to assist participants from countries proportionally underrepresented at previous Gay Games. An estimated \$15,000 was raised at the annual meeting in a campaign that will extend for the next year to complement the outreach scholarship program being conducted by Chicago Games Inc., the host of Gay Games VII in 2006.

For more information, visit www.gaygameschicago.com or www.gaygames.com.

Sweat equity

The season of mass consumerism is upon us. But you can buck the trend and give the gift of health with gift certificates from your local gym, a trainer, or yoga studio, like Mission Yoga. This year employees went all out and made some very colorful gift certificates. They fit in a regular envelope, and they'd be glad to send them to you or anyone you wish.

You can buy them over the phone by calling (415) 401-9642 or in person. You know everyone's going to jump back into their exercise routines after a few big holiday meals (yeah, right.), so this is a gift that everyone will appreciate, or hate you for passive-aggressively telling them they're out of shape. Bikram Yoga is located at 2390 Mission at 20th Street, second floor. E-mail info@missionyoga.com or visit www.missionyoga.com for more information. ▼

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Lesbian Notions

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grassroots work that we all need to pitch in and do; we can't afford to leave the task to a few thousand dedicated activists. Our first job is to get educated about what's in store regarding marriage rights in our individual states.

Antigay amendments may come up for a popular vote in as many as 20 states in the next couple of years; yours may very well be among them. I just learned that my own (blue) state is likely to see an antigay amendment on the ballot in 2007. You can find a breakdown on marriage laws and proposed amendments online at www.stateline.org. Now is the time to start donating money and volunteer hours against these amendments; the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Web site (www.thetaskforce.org) is just one of many that lists organizations working for LGBT equality by state.

As part of our self-education process, we need to master the lingo of legal relationships. If

asked, many of us probably couldn't explain how marriage differs from civil unions, or civil unions from domestic partnerships. The Freedom to Marry Web site (www.freedomtomarry.org) includes excellent, basic information on marriage rights, including charts that clearly compare the benefits and protection of the three types of legal arrangements for couples. Also, Freedom to Marry's Evan Wolfson, our premier marriage activist, has written a lucid, passionate book called *Why Marriage Matters* outlining why marriage is a fundamental right in our society.

After you've become informed, start sharing that information. Write letters to the editor or op-ed pieces for your local paper on why marriage amendments are discriminatory to gay families; respond promptly to antigay letters in the paper. Many straight people who don't support equal marriage rights but are pro-civil-unions may be unaware that the wording of some antigay amendments — like those passed in Ohio and Michigan on November 2 — jeopardizes any kind of legal recogni-

tion for same-sex couples. Use the talking points available from our national LGBT organizations, but, more importantly, tell your own story or the stories of gay families you know who are threatened by antigay amendments.

Finally, remember that change makes many Americans nervous — obviously so, or we wouldn't be stuck with President Bush for another four years. We need a strong, localized strategy that will help turn public opinion around. We won't convince everyone. Although a third of Americans are with us on the marriage issue, Wolfson says there is another third who will never be with us, no matter what we do. But hope lies in the fact that there's an all-important "middle third" of voters who are, Wolfson says, "reachable but not yet reached." ▼

Paula Martinac is a Lambda Literary Award-winning author of eight books and editor in chief of *Q Syndicate*. She can be reached care of this publication or at LesbianNotions@qsyndicate.com

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COMMUNITY NEWS

PFLAG

◀ page 14

the gay marriage issue, Thoron said he did not react with anger. Instead, he said he felt that "the senator shot from the hip and probably said something she shouldn't have."

Rather than turn against her, Thoron advised the gay community to work with Feinstein to better educate her on the issue.

"Quite possibly when she sits back she will realize that is a narrow view considering her support for human rights," he said. "You have to realize parents from that generation come from a culture not very accepting or welcoming of gays or LGBT issues. I think she

has come a long way from her cultural roots to where she is. We have to honor that, too."

Thoron said he is much more concerned about the conservatives who now wield enormous power in Washington D.C. and control the Republican Party.

"We certainly are seeing in Washington a group that basically approaches most problems with the philosophy of 'Bomb them into the stone age.' I really think they find most of the human rights movement very inconvenient and would truly like us to disappear," he said. "There is a vocal group doing everything in their power to make us disappear and certainly they have the ear of our president."

However, Thoron said he believes there is a less vocal majority

that is supportive of gay rights. And while he is disappointed in this year's election results, he sees some positives to the debate raging across the country.

"We have engaged in a conversation about these rights at a level in our history we have never done before," he said.

And for at least the next two years, Thoron has no intention of being silenced. ▼

The San Francisco PFLAG chapter meets at 2 p.m. the second Sunday of each month at St. Frances Lutheran Church, 152 Church Street, across from Safeway. To find chapters in other areas, visit www.pflag.org.

Minister

◀ page 2

possibly monitor each marriage, and that when given the call of God to marry a couple, ordination vows require a minister to serve.

"Does one believe God is at the core of this argument?" asked Taylor, who studied church polity (law) at the Pacific School of Religion Seminary in the East Bay. "Aren't we called to do what we believe in, what she believes her God called her to do?"

Presbyterian Church law makes a distinction between holy unions, blessed covenants, civil contracts, and other not quite official presentations, all of which are allowed for same-sex couples. "Tons of people are approximating marriage," said Taylor. "Everybody calls it something dif-

years earlier, she was allowed to remain a minister under a grandfather clause. A year later, Spahr started her "That All May Freely Serve" movement aimed at making the pulpit open to all. It is based in San Rafael.

Spahr's salary is paid by the Rochester church, Tiburon's Westminster Presbyterian Church, and individuals. She travels the country speaking in churches, colleges, and elsewhere to make the pulpit open to all.

Raised in a Pittsburgh Presbyterian family in the church where she was later ordained, Spahr majored in world religion at Penn State, then married Jim Spahr. He fought in Vietnam while she earned her master's of divinity from San Anselmo's San Francisco Theological Seminary, and later a Ph.D. in lesbian spirituality, in 1987.

Douglas Potter, the couple that Spahr married in Canada, are upset with the latest developments.

"Our original reaction was sadness," said Partridge, of Spahr's disciplinary hearing. "We had a legal marriage performed in Canada intentionally because it is legal there."

Spahr also has support locally. "Janie is probably the greatest Presbyterian minister I know," said the Reverend Dr. G. Penny Nixon, pastor at Metropolitan Community Church-San Francisco. "It's really tragic to me that these denominations spend more time on these kinds of issues than paying attention to what we're called to do — feed the hungry, clothe the naked. That's what our scripture says, not to condemn others. She is an amazing woman. Everyone loves her."

Another complaint resolved

A complaint lodged against Reverend Dr. Karen Oliveto, formerly pastor of Noe Valley's Bethany Methodist Church, for performing a same-sex wedding in February of this year, "was resolved in a manner consistent with the 2000 Book of Discipline," the goal of which is "reconciliation and resolution," said Bishop Beverly Shamaan, as reported on the Web site for the Pacific School of Religion where Oliveto is now assistant dean of academic affairs and director of contextual education.

The complaint claimed that her action violated the order and discipline of the church. To resolve the complaint, Oliveto and Shamaan entered a supervisory process that included a review of Oliveto's actions and ministry.

"In spite of the fact that 11 states have taken a step backward, justice will go forward," Oliveto told the B.A.R. "Justice is always unstoppable. More pastors like Janie and myself will put commitment to celebrate love above church law. As clergy we were bound to rules of the church but we are always bound to serve our clergy."

Oliveto said LGBT Christians should make some adjustments and compromises as well.

"I think as progressive Christians we have to make the same errors that progressives in general do," Oliveto said. "Are we willing to live in a community not defined by black and white values, to make room for people not just like us? We are not clear and articulate about commitment to progressive values. We don't use the media. We have ourselves to blame in not being outspoken enough. A congregation that is committed to inclusivity — how many people know that such churches exist?"

Values committed to justice need to be bold and outspoken in their witness and in their critique of justice." ▼

"We had a legal marriage performed in Canada intentionally because it is legal there."

ferent."

Taylor said Spahr's action parallels wartime conscientious objector status.

"I think ministers are marrying people in their conscience," she said. "How can you be a believer in LGBT marriage and only do whatever ceremony they want you to do?"

Taylor will also argue that Spahr performed a legal civil marriage, sanctioned by the Canadian government.

"Are they going to get in the business of monitoring actual legal marriage?" she asked. "It would be akin to, 'when sanctioned, it's legal, but you can't perform it!'"

In 1978 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA passed "Amendment B," which prohibits LGBT people from ordination. LGBT delegates lobby at almost every biennial convention to eliminate the amendment. The percentage by which they lose gets smaller and today exists only by a slim margin.

Since the 1978 General Assembly, the church has also urged parishioners to study sexuality and to respect LGBT civil rights.

Early days

In 1991 protesters challenged the call of a Rochester, New York "More Light" congregation (which welcomes LGBT participation) for Spahr to serve as pastor despite her lesbianism. Churches can declare themselves More Light, in defiance of the church constitution. The case eventually led the General Assembly PJC to deny her employment. But because Spahr was ordained four

Jane Spahr outlined her journey since coming out to family and the community in 1978, after her husband nonchalantly left the book *Loving Someone Gay*, by therapist Don Clark, sitting out.

After being invited to address women's oppression at a church function she said, "I came running into the house and I said 'Jimmy, I know who I am now.' He replied, 'I know. I've been waiting 13 years for you to say that.' That night we cried out of relief. Jim made dinner and said 'Mom, tell the boys [her sons, then age 7 and 5] the wonderful thing you learned about yourself!'"

Jim Spahr has served as a PFLAG chapter leader, marched in San Rafael's Pride Parade, and asked Spahr to preside over the marriage to his current wife.

"[He] has been an incredibly advocate and our two boys have loved me into loving myself," said Spahr.

"One of those things we were told in a matter of fact way," said Spahr's son, Jim Spahr Jr. "I grew up in a world very inclusive of people of color and different faiths. I'm blessed to grow up in that environment."

Jane Spahr went on to help found San Rafael's Spectrum LGBT Community Center and the Marin AIDS Interfaith Network.

Spahr said that not to marry a couple when asked would be a violation of her ordination vows.

She calls commitments and holy unions "second-class" marriages and calls Jesus "a man who challenged every system of oppression. When they called women 'property,' he said, 'what do you mean women can't learn?' He said 'come out of the kitchen, Mary.'"

Gregory Partridge and Dr.

LEGAL NOTICES



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

VACANCY NOTICES

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 54974, California Government Code, notice is hereby given of the following unadvertised vacancies. Interested persons may obtain an application from the Board of Supervisors web site at www.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/bdsupvs/Vacancy_Notices/vacancy_app.pdf or from the Clerk of the Rules Committee, City Hall, Room 244, SF, CA 94102. Completed applications should be submitted to the Clerk of the Board. All applicants must be residents of SF, unless otherwise stated. Additional information may be obtained by accessing the City's web site: www.sfgov.org/bdsupvs. Please Note: Depending upon the posting date, some vacancies may have already been filled. To determine if vacancies for this Board/Committee/Commission or Task Force are still available please call the Rules Committee Clerk at 554-5184.

ASTHMA TASK FORCE

Vacant seat, new appointment, seat 12, must be a representative of MediCal Managed Care Insurers and is a voting member, for the unexpired portion of a two-year term ending June 30, 2005.

Vacant seat, new appointment, seat 21, must be an individual who represents property interests (non-voting member), for the unexpired portion of a two-year term ending June 30, 2005.

PARK RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Vacant seat, succeeding Isabel Wade, resigned, seat 5, must be nominee of District 2 Supervisor from list of organizations listed in Res. 168-01, for the unexpired portion of a two-year term ending February 1, 2006.

Vacant seat, new appointment, seat 17, must be nominee of District 6 Supervisor from list of organizations listed in Res. 168-01, for the unexpired portion of a two-year term ending February 1, 2006.

Vacant seat, new appointment, seat 18, must be nominee of District 6 Supervisor from district 6, for the unexpired portion of a two-year term ending February 1, 2005.

LIBRARY CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Vacant Seat, succeeding Heather Stewart, resigned, seat 4, may be a resident of Supervisorial District 4, appointed by the district 1 Supervisor, must be a resident of SF, use the facilities and services of the SF Public Library System, and library cardholder in good standing, for the unexpired portion of a two-year term ending July 18, 2006.

Vacant Seat, new appointment, seat 6, may be a resident of Supervisorial District 6, appointed by the district 1 Supervisor, must be a resident of SF, use the facilities and services of the SF Public Library System, and library cardholder in good standing, for the unexpired portion of a two-year term ending July 18, 2006.

Vacant Seat, new appointment, seat 7, may be a resident of Supervisorial District 7, appointed by the district 1 Supervisor, must be a resident of SF, use the facilities and services of the SF Public Library System, and library cardholder in good standing, for the unexpired portion of a two-year term ending July 18, 2006.

Vacant Seat, new appointment, seat 9, may be a resident of Supervisorial District 9, appointed by the district 1 Supervisor, must be a resident of SF, use the facilities and services of the SF Public Library System, and library cardholder in good standing, for the unexpired portion of a two-year term ending July 18, 2006.

Vacant Seat, new appointment, seat 13, must be a member from the community at large, reside in SF, use the facilities and services of the SF Public Library System, library cardholder in good standing and representative of New Americans for whom English is a second language, for the unexpired portion of a two-year term ending July 18, 2006.

STATEMENT FILE A-0280535-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Monkey Business 1072 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. This business is conducted by a general partnership, signed Sar Schickendanz. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/05/1994. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 11/05/04. NOV. 11,18,25, DEC. 2, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280293-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: JessImports, 66 Gough Street San Francisco, CA 94110. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Jessica Gaston. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 03/07/1995. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 11/27/04. NOV. 11,18,25, DEC. 2, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280400-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Spencer and Company, 491 Castro Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Dennis E. Spencer. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/01/2004. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 11/01/04. NOV. 11,18,25, DEC. 2, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280477-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Bay Area Building Maintenance, 28 Ralph Street, San Francisco, CA 94112. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Hui Chang Liang. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/03/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 11/03/04. NOV. 11,18,25, DEC. 2, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280479-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: 1. California Choppers, 2. Frisco Customs, 3. U.S.A. Choppers, 4. Choppers U.S.A., 1490 Howard Street San Francisco, CA 94103. This business is conducted by a general partnership, signed Ronald Aiello. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 1/26/99. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 11/15/04. NOV. 18,25, DEC. 2, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280737-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: 1. California Choppers, 2. Frisco Customs, 3. U.S.A. Choppers, 4. Choppers U.S.A., 1490 Howard Street San Francisco, CA 94103. This business is conducted by a general partnership, signed Ronald Aiello. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 1/26/99. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 11/15/04. NOV. 18,25, DEC. 2, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280749-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: 818 Hardwood Floor, 755 Prague Street San Francisco, CA 94122. This business is conducted by a general partnership, signed Quoc Phung. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/15/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 11/15/04. NOV. 18,25, DEC. 2, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280749-00

The following person(s) have abandoned the use of the fictitious business name known as 818 Hardwood Floor located at 755 Prague Street, San Francisco, CA 94122. This business was conducted by an individual, signed Quoc Phung, the fictitious name was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 8/1/04. NOV. 18,25, DEC. 2, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280145-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Out of The Closet Thrift Store, 2415 Mission Street San Francisco, CA 94110. This business is conducted by a corporation, signed Michael Weinstein. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 10/1/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 10/21/04. NOV. 18,25, DEC. 2, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280145-00

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LEGAL NOTICES

STATEMENT FILE A-0280612-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: San Francisco Jewish Theater, 250 King, #1616, Street San Francisco, Ca. 94107. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Daniel Howard. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on NA. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/09/04. NOV. 18, 25, DEC. 2, 9, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280599-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Andrew Smith Consulting, 4150 17th Street, #9, San Francisco, Ca. 94114. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Andrew Smith. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/01/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/08/04. NOV. 18, 25, DEC. 2, 9, 2004

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE # CNC 04541423

In the matter of the application of Jose Isaac Sandoval for change of name. The application of Jose Isaac Sandoval for change of name having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Jose Isaac Sandoval has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Isaac Sandoval. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Department 218 on the 14th day of December, 2004 at 9:00 am of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted. NOV. 18, 25, DEC. 2, 9, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280195-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Viking Giant Sub 2906 Diamond Street San Francisco, Ca. 94131. This business is conducted by an individual, signed John Ahau Lan. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/22/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/22/04. NOV. 25, DEC. 2, 9, 16, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280795-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: GLBTHS, GLBT Historical Society, 657 Mission Street #300 San Francisco, Ca. 94105. This business is conducted by a corporation, signed Jacob Richards. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 09/2002. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/16/04. NOV. 25, DEC. 2, 9, 16, 2004

NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

To whom it may concern: The Name of the Applicant(s) is/are George Tanios Boudaines. The applicants listed above are applying to the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control at 185 Berry Street, Suite #5600 San Francisco, Ca. 94107, to sell alcoholic beverages at 1777 Sutter Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94115. Type of License applied for: 41 - ON SALE BEER AND WINE-EATING PLACE NOV. 24, DEC. 2, 9, 2004

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE

To whom it may concern: The Name of the Applicant(s) is/are Pham Michael Thi & Phamle Katherine Kim Thanh. The applicants listed above are applying to the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control at 185 Berry Street, Suite #5600 San Francisco, Ca. 94107, to sell alcoholic beverages at 3273 Sacramento Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94115. Type of License applied for:

21 OFF-SALE GENERAL DEC. 2, 2004

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE # CNC 04541638

In the matter of the application of Theodore Gabriel for change of name. The application of Theodore Gabriel for change of name having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Theodore Gabriel has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Theodore Gabriel Tasulas. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Department 218 on the 13th day of January, 2004 at 9:00 am of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted. NOV. 18, 25, DEC. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280195-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: El Rincon, 2700 16th Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94103. This business is conducted by a corporation, signed J.C. Yadav. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/24/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/24/04. NOV. 25, DEC. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280989-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: J.P. Limos, 2794 40th Ave., San Francisco, Ca. 94116. This business is conducted by an individual, signed J.P. Limos. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/29/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/29/04. NOV. 25, DEC. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0281023-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: 41 - ON SALE BEER AND WINE-EATING PLACE NOV. 24, DEC. 2, 9, 2004

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page 36

Big Sweet rules

Zora Neale Hurston's 'Polk County' onstage.

page 33

**London calling**

La Toya is set to appear in 'Help Is on the Way.'

page 31

**BAY AREA REPORTER**

Vol. 34 • No. 49 • 2 December 2004

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Tchaikovsky meets TRAUMA FLINTSTONE

Take the wig down from the shelf for the annual 'Dance-Along Nutcracker'

by Heidi Beeler

This weekend, self-proclaimed lipstick thespian and band hag Trauma Flintstone tunes up her tonsils and doffs her flame-red wig for Big Bad Wolf and Little Pig drag at the 2004 *Dance-Along Nutcracker* at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

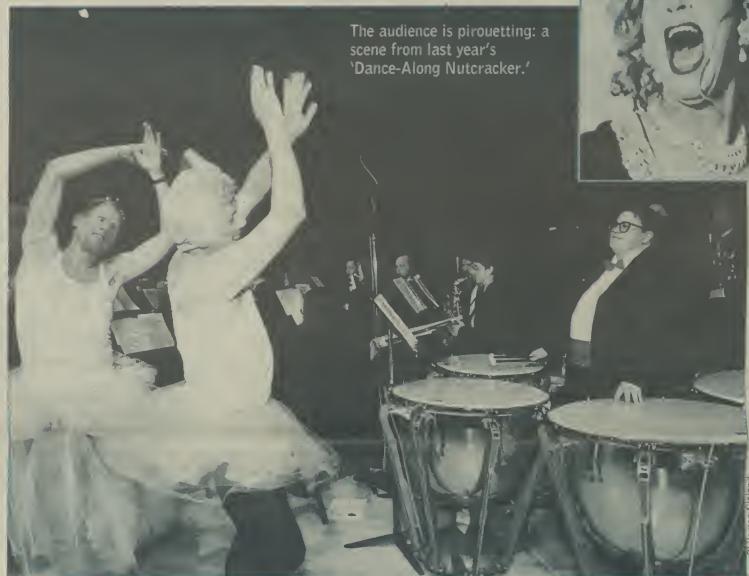
The *Dance-Along Nutcracker* is the annual holiday shindig delivered by the San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band. It is perhaps best described as a cross between a variety show, a costume pageant and the choreographic equivalent of a barn-raising in toe shoes. Audience members so inclined strap on tutus and tiaras from the Tutu Rental Boutique — if they haven't brought their own — and storm the dance floor as the Freedom Band performs Tchaikovsky Fantasia favorites, like "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy," "Russian Trepak" and "Waltz of the Flowers."

Only the Suite portion of Tchaikovsky's ballet — the collection of fairyland and confectionery dances in the second act — has been transcribed for wind ensemble. So each year, Artistic Director/Conductor Jadine Louie selects complementary music on a theme, and brings in guest artists to do bits that separate dance-along segments, giving the audience a chance to catch its breath and see something spectacular or even a little vaudeville — or *La Cage* — along the way.

Enter Flintstone, stage very left. Subtitled *Once Upon a Tutu*, this year's *Dance-Along* theme is children's stories and fairy tales — and I'll leave it to you to find where the dividing line lies betwixt children and fairies here. It is that spirit of make-believe and fantasy veering into high camp that the show seeks to inspire, no matter what the audience's age. Casting an actor best known for his outrageous drag personas in shows like *Acid Housewife*, *The Andrews Sisters Hollywood Canteen* and *Christmas with the Crawfords* as storybook characters makes great sense.

Texas rose

A veteran of more than 40 productions on both coasts over the past 10 years, Flintstone comes to the *Dance-Along* just finishing a run as Miss Texas in the New Conservatory Theatre Center's production



The audience is pirouetting: a scene from last year's 'Dance-Along Nutcracker.'



Jane Flintstone/Elle and

of *Pageant*, another show that got the audience into the act. A drag send-up of a beauty contest with contestants bearing titles like Miss Deep South and Miss Bible Belt, the audience voted for the ultimate winner. According to Flintstone, the more raucous the voting was, the better.

"My favorite performance was the night when there was only a 1-point spread between all five contestants," Flintstone chuckled. "The audience had to whoop and holler to choose the final winner. It was out of control, and

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Queer movers and shakers Gay books to consider for holiday gifts

by Tavo Amador



Unsure what to give family, friends or colleagues for the holidays? Books are often excellent choices. This year, publishers have released an eclectic selection with something for everyone on our gift list.

Feeling extravagant? *Oscar Night — 75 Years of Hollywood Parties* from the Editors of *Vanity Fair* by Graydon Carter and David Friend (Knopf, \$75) is a deluxe coffee-table tome that will thrill fans of "The Gay Super Bowl." The pictures are from the post-awards parties, with gloating winners and disappointed losers. The candid photographs capture Tinseltown's stars of yesterday and today in unguarded moments.

Another large, lavishly illustrated volume, *Broadway Musicals: The 101 Greatest Shows of All Time* by Ken Bloom and Frank Vlastnick (Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers, \$34.95) is a comparative bargain. Their favorites include the usual suspects, even if the originals predated the authors' births. They do list a few surprises, *Do, Re, Me* and *She Loves Me* among them, and have a nice selection of flops, including Irving Berlin's *Mr. President*, *The Vamp* with Carol Channing, and *Happy Hunting*, a mid-'50s show starring Ethel Merman and Fernando Lamas. The last had an undistinguished score, but ran for well over a year, and, as Merman reminded everyone, she never had a flop. Their inventive section on "Guilty Pleasures" includes Shelley Winters

in *Minnie's Boys*: Groucho, Harpo, Chico, Zeppo, and Gummo Marx.

Chronicle Books has published Jenni Olson's *The Queer Movie Poster Book* (\$19.95), which shows how far we've come, baby. Lurid ads for films like *Victim* ('61) or *Cruising* ('80) are amazing when compared with recent releases. Fans of classic Hollywood or those interested in the price of stardom will find Marc Eliot's *Cary Grant* (Harmony Books, \$25.95) absorbing. Eliot frankly discusses Tinseltown's quintessential leading man's bisexuality, his intense affair with actor Randolph Scott, his five marriages, use of LSD, and his complex, morose personality.

Leading lady

Although she made several movies and won a New York Film Critics Best Actress award, Alabama's Tallulah Bankhead (1903-68) was a noted theatrical star of the '30s and '40s and her era's most outrageous personality. She was a daughter of the Speaker of the US House of Representatives; a granddaughter of a US Senator; and a niece of a House member. In *Tallulah, The Life and Times of a Leading Lady* (Regan Books, \$29.95), Joel Lobenthal covers her aggressive bisexuality, heavy drinking and drugging, her often underutilized talent, her legendary triumphs and famous failures.

One of Bankhead's last public appearances was at Truman Capote's celebrated Costume Ball ('66) in New

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The cure for Santa Claustrophobia

Choose a Danube cruise, Queer punk or John Waters X-mas

by Roberto Friedman

Even though the sun is brightly shining into our dingy South of Market window, it's beginning to feel a lot like December in that faraway land called Baltimore. That's because we just received a review copy of the new CD *A John Waters Christmas*. It's a quirky little Yuletide song compilation assembled by the legendary film director, just out from New Line



Records, and to play it is to imagine oneself in Charm City. We think you'll get the idea if we furnish a partial playlist of what's on the disc.

- **Fat Daddy**, "Fat Daddy (Is Santa Claus)"
- **Tiny Tim**, "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer"
- **Rudolph and Gang**, "Here Comes Fatty Claus"
- **Alvin and the Chipmunks**, "Sleigh Ride"
- **AKIM & the Teddy Vann Production Co.**, "Santa Claus Is a Black Man."

Yes, if Out There must listen to Xmas mush, this is the holiday



San Francisco Opera stalwarts Bill Repp and Tom Taffel will go cruising.

helping we want. Moreover, if there's a stereo system at our office Xmas party, now you know what tunes will be spinning.

Cruising corner

One of the great perks of Out There's job is getting to know some of the people who work in the arts and help keep culture alive in this frontier town. One shining example is San Francisco Opera's press concierge **Bill Repp**, who has been the welcoming face of the War Memorial for us at the opera house's Grove Street door, to these many seasons.

Now comes word that Repp's longtime partner **Tom Taffel**, manager of the opera house's Intermezzo lounge, has put together a 7-day Danube River cruise on the luxurious river vessel **Mozart**, a trip created specifically with opera, symphony and ballet-lovers in mind.

The tour departs SFO for Munich, Germany, on May 12, 2005, and features overnights in Munich, Budapest and Vienna, where cruisers will attend such high culture offerings as **Jacques Offenbach's** *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at Vienna's Staatsoper, and **Erkel Ferenc's** *Hunyadi László* at the New Hungarian Opera in Budapest. That kind of stuff just rocks Out There's boat!

An initial two days in Munich

include a tour of the Bavarian countryside which will bring cruisers, on a pilgrimage of sorts, to mad gay **King Ludwig II's** royal castle Neuschwanstein, which was the prototype for **Cinderella's** decadent digs at Disney-land.

It promises to be a piss-elegant yet "country-club casual" cruise that sounds pretty gay, gay, gay. In perhaps an international first, the Mozart's dining room will be no smoking — a major concession from the Germans and Austrians, who smoke like chimneys. Sign us up! Info at www.Toms-GroupCruises.com. Act quickly, because, as in life, the best cabins always go first.

Local-color bonus feature: Taffel has a fond memory of cruising down the river on a previous tour, waving to a pair of young Polish lads fishing on the bank. "Well, you know Bill," he said. "He wouldn't stop until they noticed us." The strapping Poles turned around and defiantly moaned them. What a visual highlight!

Punk power

If rocking out in the moshpit to "Die Die" by **Dominatrix** or "Cock Rock" by **The Dead Betties** is more your speed, you should know about the **Queercore Blitz** tour coming to 924 Gilman in Berkeley on Sat., Dec. 11. The all-queer lineup includes the above two bands as well as **Triple Creme, Jack Queen, Sugarpuss and Gang-Way**. It's an all-ages show with a guaranteed young and enthusiastic audience, and some of these fans will no doubt be thrashing to the 4/4 beat onstage themselves some day.

The Dead Betties, whose likeness we reproduce here, are a hardcore Brooklyn trio whose website says they are driven by "a relentless longing to escape consciousness." Wanna be se-

dated? More info at www.queercoreblitz.com.

Paris is burning

It isn't at all uncommon to see a limo in the Castro, but when glamorous celeb **Paris Hilton** is seen coming out of said limo, it does cause quite a stir. Hilton was seen going into Sorrento Sun Center on Noe Street last Friday evening around 6 p.m. to get her tan on. It seems she's a fan of "Mystic Tan," and Sorrento and their sister salon Great Tan are the only two salons in SF that offer that particular spray-booth.

Sources say she used the "Ultradibronz 950" tanning bed, followed by a Mystic Tan. This is confirmed by other clients who happened to be in the salon at the time, and by the "New Client" form she dutifully filled out. But wait, there's more: On her way out, La Hilton signed an autograph for the lucky person working the counter, which reads in full, "That's hot love, Paris." Szzzz!

Letter to the editor

Question to the *Out There* editors of the *San Francisco Chronicle*: Why wasn't there a **Little Man** slumping in his chair for your dance critic's recent scattershot sniping of **Matthew Bourne's Nutcracker!** for Cal Performances? Wouldn't there normally be the loathsome cartoon Li'l Man asleep in his critic's chair (or vacant) appended to a review of that sort?

Professionals (we mean performers, not your reviewers) despise that clappin' happy, stupefied silly, or downright absent little mister because his picture always oversimplifies any nuanced critical reaction to a movie, show or musical offering. He's always portrayed in one of very few postures, which then gets repeated *ad infinitum* in the Sunday capsules. The Li'l Man is either ejaculating out of his seat, some middle thing, or slumbering in boredom. Thumbs up or down. Sophisticated.

But if that's your critical m.o., why not use it for this one drive-by review? At least have the courage to be consistent.

Just one more thing, and then we'll quit grousing. The other night Out There was at the movies to see the **Patty Hearst** doc *Guerilla* at the Lumiere (a hoot). We sat through the usual previews, plus some trailers for HBO films. Gee, Landmark Theatres never used to run commercials for outside product. Why hasn't the *Out There* section been covering the plans of the guys who acquired Landmark (*New York Times*, July 19, 2004), rather than gunning for traveling troupes? ▼

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All that training-bra rock make you sick? The Dead Betties offer us some good ol' Cock-Rock in the upcoming Queercore Blitz Tour.

American idolized

La Toya London lends a 'Help'-ing hand

by Adam Sandel

The celebrity lineup for the annual *Help is on the Way for the Holidays* concert typically includes a roster of television stars, local cabaret favorites and *Phantom* alumni, raising their voices to benefit the Richmond/Ermet AIDS Foundation.

This Sunday's show at the Herbst Theatre includes local faves Connie Champagne, Spencer Day, Tim Hockenberry, Sharon McNight, The Kinsey Sicks and principal dancers from the San Francisco Ballet.

While the roster of television celebs is thinner than usual this time out, the show will feature one of the most promising breakout stars of the year. La Toya London is the Oakland native whose beauty, grace and magnificent voice made her a national sensation on last season's



Oakland native, national sensation.

especially close with *Idol* winner Fantasia, Jennifer Hudson, George Huff and Jasmine Trias — despite the fact that a phone-banking effort by Jasmine's Hawaiian fans caused London to be prematurely

To her fans: "Thanks a lot for catapulting me and supporting me."

American Idol.

This past year has been a whirlwind for the 25-year-old London, who brought me up-to-date on her burgeoning career while relaxing in an LA spa. After touring the country with the other Top 10 *Idol* finalists from July to October, she recently signed with the jazz label Peak Records.

"I'm meeting with producers and working on a new album," she said. "It will be original music for people of all ages, and some of the songs will have my own lyrics."

As much as *American Idol* emphasizes the competition between contestants — with the suspense of who's about to be eliminated wrapped around innumerable commercial breaks — the *Idol* experience actually bonds the competitors more than it divides them.

Over the course of the show and the tour, London has become

eliminated from the competition.

Good experience

London cited the recent tour as one of the best parts of the experience. "It was great performing on an arena stage, because now I'll be ready for it when I'm performing on my own," she said.

"Gaining a fan base from the show has been great," she said. "One of the biggest parts of the promotion and marketing of a new artist is getting people to know who you are. That will be an easy transition for me now, because the fans are there."

London said that the most challenging part of being an *Idol* contestant was the singing itself, and hoping for the responses she wanted from the audience and the judges. There wasn't much off-camera contact between the contestants and judges. "We'd see them in the audience, and they'd

come backstage briefly, but we never got to have a close relationship or get to know them."

London's favorite judge was the acerbic Simon Cowell, "because you never know what he's going to say," but she isn't sure how much of his "cruel to be kind" image is real, or how much is put on. "They need him to be that way for the show," she admitted.

The one thing the *Idol* viewers may not realize is, "It's not as easy as it looks. It's an all-week process of getting up at 8 a.m., going to CBS to choose songs, rehearse songs and do interviews."

London's personal idols, the ones who inspired her the most while she was growing up, were Whitney Houston in the '80s, Mariah Carey and Anita Baker.

Transitioning from local band singer to recording star on the rise has required London to move to Los Angeles, leaving her husband and two stepchildren back in Oakland. "I'll be shuttling back and forth," she said of the December move. "It was something we knew was going to happen."

The Bay Area connection that led London to perform in *Help is on the Way for the Holidays VI* was a simple and direct one. *Help is on the Way* producer Joe Seiler works with London's mother at Delta Dental.

Performing in the benefit concert is London's way of supporting the Richmond/Ermet AIDS Foundation and thanking her Bay Area fans. "Thanks a lot for catapulting me and supporting me," she said. "And look for the new album."

Help is on the Way for the Holidays VI takes place on Sunday, December 5, at the Herbst Theatre, San Francisco. Silent auction, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Show, 7:30 p.m.

The show benefits the HIV/AIDS Program at Children's Hospital Oakland, Positive Resource Center, and Asian Pacific Islander Wellness Center.

Tickets: Show only, \$45-65; Reception with the cast, \$100 and up. Call City Box Office at (415) 392-4400 or order online at www.cityboxoffice.com. ▼

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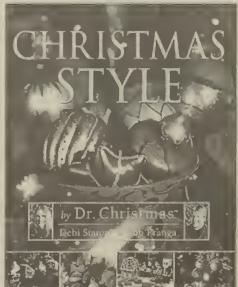
Garland, Judy!

by Jim Piechota

Christmas Style by Debi Staron and Bob Pranga; DK Publishing, \$29.95

Now that the incarcerated Martha Stewart is busy becoming someone else's bitch, Christmas might feel flat without someone telling us what to prepare, what to eat, and how to live. Like clockwork, Debi Staron and Bob Pranga, the creative engine behind the LA-based decorating machine known as "Dr. Christmas," have just published a kaleidoscopically photographed, intricately detailed book of holiday furnishing ideas.

Wide-ranging themes feature the snowy charm of more traditional Christmas motifs to the metallic, the jeweled and the pastel-toned, with Gothic royal velvet themes to contrast pages of retro, children's, and tropical ideas. Both decorators have their extensive collections of celebrity auto-



graphed ornaments on display, since Staron and Pranga have used their amazing transformative powers on the homes of such luminaries as Candice Bergen, Carrie Fisher, Teri Garr and Leesa Gibbons, who genuflects to the couple in the book's cloying introduction.

Some design themes are more than a little fussy. Not many will find the appeal of a hot pink tree-skirt or the placement of a cotton-candy-colored Christmas tree

(with electric lights!) in the shower stall in order to keep all the rooms in the home consistent. Affixing a vintage wedding gown to your tree and trimming around it for a Christmas wedding centerpiece is ridiculously unimaginable.

The generous section on selecting, caring for, and lighting both live and artificial trees and creating festive bows is instructive and useful, and makes up for the kitschy section on trees that have been fabricated (many with mannequin parts) to honor various entertainment-industry icons in the "Twelve Dames of Christmas" chapter.

With their "Dr. Christmas" business presently in its 20th year, Staron and the openly gay Pranga see no end to their innovative productions. While passions might ebb and flow over the years, this flamboyantly artistic pairing of decorators has created an empire based on color, texture, and extravagant beauty that's celebrated with this guidebook, gaudy or otherwise. ▼

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Russian dressing

'Eugene Onegin' with all the fixins'

by Stephanie von Buchau

Once again, as San Francisco Opera presents its final production of 2004, the argument is not between the modernists and the antediluvians, but between the optimists and the pessimists. The optimists see the good in the new *Eugene Onegin*, and ignore or absolve the bad. The pessimists are so annoyed by the now-predictable staging oddities that they can't see the forest for the trees.

The forest reference is apt in the clean, handsome birch trees that surround most of Tchaikovsky's "seven lyric scenes" (the composer's preferred subtitle). Designed by Peter Pabst, they emit a strong whiff of Russian countryside. An opera without industrial-waste areas is a rarity on the War Memorial stage these days. The indoor sequences are mostly staged in boxes in front of the trees (Tatyana's bedroom is

strikingly successful) or on a vast stage just ringed by trees.

If only stage director Johannes Schaaf — that cuddly elder party with the Nehru jacket and aureole of white hair — had just followed Pabst's severe taste. An opera like *Onegin*, which deals with interior states of being, needs to be grounded in a specific period. Granted, Schaaf updates the work from Pushkin's 1820 to the late 19th century, which allows Pabst to design full skirts and crinolines for the ladies, rather than the more appropriate narrow-skirted, high-waisted dresses, but he still doesn't avoid anachronisms.

Worse is the contemporary "touch" of turning Tatyana's name-day party into a Halloween masquerade, complete with witches, goblins and younger sister Olga dressed in a boyish clown suit and orange fright-wig. Never mind that in any part of the 19th century, a young girl who appeared in trousers in public would be shunned for life. Schaaf's

Konzept, if you can even figure it out, is physically ugly and morally bankrupt. Olga is flighty, she's not a tramp.

The other annoying "coup de theatre" is a pyrotechnical feat involving a giant chandelier in the St. Petersburg ballroom, where Onegin realizes that Tatyana is a lot more desirable than he first thought. It is lighted by a fireball that shoots from the stage into three tiers of candles high above. They burn exactly as long as the scene takes, and we spend many anxious moments watching them smoke and burn out. If anybody is listening to the music at that point, they're a better man than I am.

Having a ball

Actually, it doesn't matter if you're not listening, because Schaaf isn't, either. The ball scene in *Onegin* is full of exquisite dances, but nobody dances. Tchaikovsky's point is that society is fast, frivolous and hectic; now



Russell Braun as Eugene Onegin



Elena Prokina as Tatyana: radiant

gin is the same thing wrong with a lot of SFO's productions. Because it substitutes pyrotechnics, oddball movements and stage debris for actual listening, it is unmusical. Trying to decide whether to succumb to Onegin's advances, Tatyana pulls out all her shoes, which litter the floor of her boudoir, constituting a physical hazard and some kind of psychological symbolism I'm afraid I didn't grasp. Trying to avoid Onegin in Act I, she plunges head-first into the stream where the girls are laundering sheets. Anything that makes the audience laugh where they shouldn't is not a psychological insight, it's a dumb move.

Yet the opera's greatest moment, the "Letter Scene," is beautifully, simply staged; and Elena Prokina, no longer the innocent, pure-voiced Tatyana of our 1997 production, still made much of it. She's full of radiant intensity, though seven years later, she has started to sing under the pitch at climactic moments. Ironically, that '97 *Onegin*, played and directed by Yuri Temirkanov (who, coincidentally, gave three sensational concerts at Davies Hall with his own St. Petersburg Philharmonic just days before the new *Onegin* opened) suffered, as this one does, from an undercast protagonist.

Russell Braun looks and acts like a Midwestern high school football coach, physically bluff and hearty, but vocally bland and underpowered. Why Tatyana would take one look at him and fall head over heels in love is beyond me. He did find a ringing high G at the end, which made up for a lot, but not for being as charismatic as cottage cheese.

The evening's vocal star was Polish tenor Piotr Beczala, making his American opera debut. He emitted a steady stream of glamorous sound, and acted the poet Lensky impetuously. That was probably the best interpretation of "Kuda, kuda" I've heard since Fritz Wunderlich. The supporting players supported; there is no point in pretending they excelled.

In the pit was a 28-year-old Israeli conductor, Iain Volkov, who managed to keep things moving and control the ensembles, but he didn't cause the orchestra to sound Russian, or offer anything that particularly made you want to have him back. However, as long as we are counting the glass half-full or half-empty, Ian Robertson's chorus made a complete recovery from its *Flying Dutchman* debacle. ▼

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Down at the sawmill

Realizing 'Polk County's riches onstage

by Richard Dodds

Don't mess with Big Sweet. She'll have you crying uncle before you even hit the ground. One of the most exciting new theater roles for women is actually 60 years old.

Big Sweet is the big shot of *Polk County*, a musical play written by Zora Neale Hurston and Dorothy Waring in 1944, but forgotten for decades. Rediscovered in an unsorted bin at the Library of Congress in 1997, it finally reached the stage two years ago and fostered the large and exciting current production at Berkeley Rep.

Hurston, a legend of the Harlem Renaissance, often traveled back to her rural Florida childhood home to chronicle and absorb its language, customs, and folklore. *Polk County*, set in a sawmill camp during the Depression, came out of those journeys, but Hurston's creative differences with Waring apparently sank plans for a Broadway production.

The play, adapted by director Kyle Donnelly and Cathy Madison, creates a society in microcosm with its own rules and hierarchies. These black sawmill workers occasionally make references to "the man," their unseen white bosses, but are mostly con-



Kevin Jackson and Kecia Lewis

cerned with three personal Rs: respect, romance, and revenge. Big Sweet, when threatened with banishment, is panicked because at the camp she is a somebody and will lose that sustaining identity if she must leave.

When we first see Big Sweet, played with a ferocity both scary and heart-rending by Kecia Lewis, she is pummeling a male co-worker for cheating her honey (Kevin Jackson) out of six dollars. But she's got a soft side, too, taking under her wing a virginal vis-

itor from New York with an interest in learning the blues. Leafy Lee (a lovely Tiffany Thompson) will need this protection, because she's caught the eye of a musician (Clinton Derricks-Carroll) who has long been the romantic quest of the bitterly twisted Dicey Long (a charismatically repellent Perri Gaffney).

The language is richly vernacular, and performed with authentic grace by the 17-member cast in this co-production with New Jersey's McCarter Theatre. Both traditional music and new songs by Chic Man Street have been interpolated, somewhat unevenly, into the show. In the first act, the songs are part of the way the workers entertain themselves, but in the second act they're more like show tunes, complete with choreographed production numbers. They may be rousing, but they can also cheapen the proceedings.

How more effective it is when Lewis, as Big Sweet, unleashes a powerfully raw voice on "John Henry" to show Leafy what the blues really sound like. No embellishment is needed. ▼

Polk County will run at Berkeley Repertory Theatre through Jan. 9. Tickets are \$15-\$60. Call (510) 647-2949

The rich are different

Grodnin's 'Right Kind of People' at Magic

by Richard Dodds

Most of us have no control over who moves in next door. Fair-housing laws don't cotton much interference in this realm. But co-ops, buildings in which residents own shares rather than their individual units, are one of the remaining places where you can pick your neighbors. Or more precisely, an elected board scrutinizes prospective buyers for any signs they might not fit in. Not because they may be black or Jewish or divorced, mind you. It's just about comfort levels and protecting the shareholders' investments.

Charles Grodin served on such a board in a fashionable New York co-op, and his horror at the Byzantine maneuvers, intra-building warfare, and batty conspiracy theories soon turned to dramatic fascination. He took lots of notes, eventually moved out of the building, and then wrote *The Right Kind of People*. He'd probably have some trouble getting back into one of those buildings now.

But *The Right Kind of People*, having its world premiere at the Magic Theatre, is meant as more than an exposé of co-op boards. Grodin, who obviously revels in the comic absurdities he encountered, wants us to see the co-op situation as an incubator of prejudice that can arise whenever one has the power to choose your neighbors, workmates, or even who you sit next to on a bus. The message does get spelled out in several soapbox speeches, but Grodin also lets the players hang themselves.

Under Chris Smith's direction, the 90-minute play moves briskly through its many scenes, though



Ken Ruta (Frank) and Robert Parsons (Tom) are a rich uncle and nephew.

the script does occasionally get bogged down in the mechanisms of co-op rules and regulations. Still, there is a considerable amount of sharply observed humor that arises from the board meetings and behind-the-scenes politicking. When a prospective buyer is found to have an old traffic ticket for driving the wrong way down a one-way street, he is turned down for being a possible alcoholic. But one of the more empathetic board members asks, "Where are rich people with drinking problems supposed to live?"

To provide a storyline on which to hang these slices of co-op life, Grodin has created a relationship between an old-time resident and a nephew he convinces

to move into the building and then to provide dutiful support on the board. But Tom, a young Broadway producer (and the acknowledged voice of Grodin), lets the players hang themselves.

Grodin, like his alter-ego Tom, eventually moved to an expensive Connecticut suburb where economics has a less personal way of sorting out who gets to live there. Both Grodin and Tom see that as a personal step against bigotry, but let's hold off on issuing any medals for valor. ▼

The Right Kind of People will run at the Magic Theatre through Dec. 12. Tickets are \$20-\$38. Call 441-8822 or go to magictheatre.org.

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Mama 'Messiah' mania

'Sing-It-Yourself' at Davies Hall this Mon.

by Jason Victor Serinus

The Mother of all *Sing-It-Yourself Messiahs* exclaims its 26th annual Hallelujah Chorus this week. The ever-popular Davies Hall event, a benefit for the San Francisco Conservatory, will again be conducted by Bruce Lamott, director of the superb Philharmonia Baroque

Chorale and visiting professor of music history in the Conservatory's graduate program.

Lamott, who has been with his partner, San Francisco Opera musical administrator Kip Cranna, for 31 years, explains that the event originated in the War Memorial Opera House before Davies Symphony Hall was even built. As the first event of its kind in the region, as well as one of the first public events held in Davies, it has spawned any number of offspring, including such delightful bastard children as the recent *Sing-a-Long Sound of Music*.

One cannot deny that some greet the prospect of yet another season of *Messiahs* and *Nutcrackers* with a degree of dread. Yet what they frequently overlook is what Lamott terms the "miracle" of 3,000 people who have learned Handel's great music in high school, church, and college glee clubs coming together to sing without rehearsal.

"The first year I conducted," he reveals, "I expected I'd have to drag the choristers through Handel's tricky fugues. Instead, I discovered there's an accuracy that comes about all from everyone singing together. The mistakes cancel each other out, and the overall effect is very grand and very beautiful."

Quipping that the event is the *Bay to Breakers* of classical music, Lamott marvels at its confluence of choristers, spectators, and

singers-in-waiting.

"Some come for the musical high, some for the spiritual high, and some for all of the above. A lot come just to listen. People should not shy away from attending if they're not prepared to sing. The wonderful sense-around experience plus the enthusiasm of everyone singing can transport you."

While Lamott certainly intends to "put some fun" into the evening, he acknowledges that people can't dress in the kinds of droll costumes worn to the *Dance-Along Nutcracker*, "unless they want to dress as sheep."

Aerobic conducting

He expects the singers will surprise each other by how good they are. "It's great aerobic exercise. I even sign for the rhythm-impaired, even if I don't have a clue as to where the altos may be sitting at the time."

"It gets people into a great holiday spirit. As they are leaving, they tend to burst into spontaneous Christmas carols. You get these wonderful Charles Ives moments where people run into people on the stairs, singing different carols in different keys."

With paying attendees providing the choruses, solos are performed by a cast of young Conservatory singers whom Lamott terms "the pros of tomorrow." Certainly his optimism is grounded in the example of Elza van der Heever, a sensational young Con-



Conductor Bruce Lamott: grand.

servatory graduate who has recently been selected as an Adler Fellow and is already receiving prestigious invitations from the Kennedy Center and other organizations.

As to his own role, Lamott acknowledges that conducting the sing-along is "the thrill of a lifetime. Of course, I get an insane sense of power while I hold off that last Hallelujah as 3,000 people are expectantly waiting to sing those last few chords."

"I don't want to sound very Marin County about this, but I am slowly overcoming my buttoned-down Presbyterian beliefs about folks giving off energy. There's an energy in the room so thick you could chew on it when I first walk out on that Davies stage. It's a big, feel-good experience from top to bottom."

SF's annual *Sing-It-Yourself Messiah* is this Monday evening, Dec. 6, 8 p.m., in Davies Symphony Hall. Tickets: (415) 864-6000, or www.sfcm.edu. ▼

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Papa's charms

by Tim Pfaff

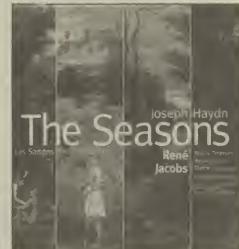
It's always been easier to preach Haydn than to practice him.

The enormity of his output suggests that it all but plays itself. But audiences know differently. Although its greatness is a given, it is hard to get it right. Dullness waits to pounce when even his most engaging scores are performed.

René Jacobs' new recording of Haydn's *The Seasons* (Harmonia Mundi) captures the drama and mystery of the piece, as well as its charms, and demonstrates in precise ways how profligate the composer's imagination remained to the very end. It's an article of faith that the 1801 oratorio, the composer's last work of any consequence, finds him at the peak of his powers. Jacobs' CD proves that more definitively than any other in the catalogue.

Jacobs' recording (based on performances at the 2003 Innsbruck Festival, featuring his exceptional Freiberger Barockchor-ester; the RIAS Kammerchor; Marlis Petersen, Werner Güra, Dietrich Henschel as vocal soloists) makes the most of the piece's beguiling bits. Roosters crow, bells peal, farmers whistle, and frogs croak on cue, with the pithy instrumental colors only period instruments allow. But Jacobs shyly acknowledges the little-known fact that the wise, aging Haydn hated being forced, by his librettist, to compose the frog music. Jacobs' attention, like Haydn's, goes to the fragile yet increasingly profound narrative lurking within.

The seasons, beginning with



sing sumptuously. Henschel has the musically hard work, and by the time he reaches the searching music in "Winter," it does remind you of his haunting *Winterreise*.

Seven words

The work Haydn himself considered the finest in his vast output, *The Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross*, has recently appeared in two versions. Although his first version was for liturgical performance by a small orchestra, he later made string quartet and choral versions of it, and sanctioned a keyboard transcription, after he revised it somewhat.

The string quartet version by the Emerson Quartet (DG) is a must for Haydn aficionados. Between the fourth and fifth sonatas that make up the substance of the work, the Emerson introduces its own transcription of a wind interlude from the choral version. The interpolation is justified by the beauty with which the Emerson plays it.

The players' vast experience with Shostakovich has stood them well for an all-adagio work, and they play the *Seven Last Words* with acuity and insight. Still, the polish and uniformity of their sound does become tiring over the course of the work.

Jaroslav Tuma's new fortepiano version (Praga) on a fine copy of a Walter fortepiano underscores the point. The crass misconception that the fortepiano is a more limited, less expressive instrument than the modern grand is refuted from the start, and Tuma's exemplary musicianship sustains interest throughout. ▼

FILM

Hollywood dream factory

Not quite an 'Overnight' success

by David Lamble

W henever the gods wish to destroy, they first introduce to Harvey Weinstein. In 1997, fresh from the hubris of another Oscar sweep, the Miramax Studio co-chief thought he'd found the next Tarantino working as a bouncer/bartender at a West Hollywood dive named J. Sloan's. Sloan's is the kind of joint frequented by guys who started drinking when they were 14.

The only thing that distin-

guished Troy Duffy from those guys was that he'd gone to college and written a screenplay. Duffy's script for *The Boondock Saints* featured a ragtag bunch of hard-drinking Irish guys who defend their watering hole from the Russian Mafia, and whose bloody misadventures come to the attention of a gay cop. Warning: this gay hook will reappear in a sadly funny way.

What exactly did Harvey see in Troy that prompted the kind of offer most of us could only dream about? This we never learn, but an excellent new film, *Overnight*, fills us in on virtually every nutty misstep Duffy and his buddies would make over three years as they sought with increasing desperation to live the dream. Harvey's offer had included purchase of the screenplay, a \$15 million production budget, and even a promise

to help Duffy buy the bar. Pretty soon, Duffy is taking meetings at the bar with an A-list of actors: Mark Wahlberg, Billy Zane, Matthew Modine, Vincent D'Onofrio and Patrick Swayze. Wahlberg seems most at home at J. Sloan's, but neither he nor any other cute tough-guy joins *Boondocks*. Soon, Duffy is heard cursing out potential cast members Keanu Reeves and Ethan Hawke. Duffy sucks up to Kenneth Branagh's answering machine. Branagh passes. As the casting sessions go nowhere, meetings of

for half the budget, and Duffy's dream is filmed in Toronto. The only time this mutt ever seems happy is when he's directing a first-rate cast (Billy Connolly and Willem Dafoe, as the gay cop) in a profanity-driven ballet of bullets. Connolly thinks the picture is a hoot, and seems to get Duffy's black Irish disposition. Dafoe simply tells him to "shut up!"

Overnight joins black-comedy film fiction like *The Big Picture* as a cautionary tale on how not to become rich and famous. The filmmakers give us priceless moments when even other family members start jumping ship. Mom, the only Duffy who appears not to be congenitally depressed, offers Troy a prescient bit of advice as they're driving through Hollywood. Hearing Troy rant about brother Taylor's refusal to give him sufficient credit, she notes wistfully, "That's the reason I divorced your father. He had to be up and I had to be down. You gotta figure out another way to approach people."

Harvey Weinstein appears only once, eating a dish of ice cream while strolling through the Cannes Festival. *The Boondock Saints* is out on video, where it's become a slight youth cult favorite. Smith and Montana are the only members of Duffy's "syndicate" ever likely to see a dime of profit from the affair. That is, if you catch *Overnight* during its week at a local Landmark Theatre. ▼

Bullets over Toronto

Soon Harvey has put *The Boondock Saints* into the Hollywood oblivion of "turnaround." A small company picks up the film

Doctor no

'Who Killed Bambi?'

by David Lamble

In the sexy French medical thriller *Who Killed Bambi?*, opening Friday at the Castro, a creepy surgeon named Dr. Philipp (Laurent Lucas, chillingly low-key in a role the late Tony Perkins would have killed to play) approaches an impossibly innocent nurse intern (newcomer Sophie Quinton, very believable as a naif turned detective) and purrs, "Your name is not Isabelle, it's Bambi."

Dr. Philipp has shown himself to be a very bad boy, slithering around the impossibly white corridors imposing himself on comatose and scantily clad female patients at night, while during the day he alternates surgery with theft and adulteration of the medical center's anesthesia supplies. This is one hospital where it might be safer to be sexually abused than to be operated on.

First-time director Gilles Marchand (co-writer of the excellent *With a Friend like Harry and Human Resources*) has ruthlessly reinvented the medical thriller. While in Michael Crichton's 1978 hospital mystery *Coma*, a female doctor (Genevieve Bujold) discovered a vast corporate for-profit conspiracy to murder patients and harvest their bodies, Marchand's *Who Killed Bambi?* finds hospital

management completely oblivious to Dr. Philipp's Midnight crimes.

When Isabelle faints in Dr. Philipp's presence, he suggests she may be suffering from an imbalance of fluids in her inner ear. Isabelle essentially stumbles through the rest of the film wondering if Dr. Philipp's crimes are but a figment of her pleasant if disturbing dream. Her waking life is fleshed out with amusing subplots involving a French/Arab intern boyfriend (the slinky Yasmine Belmadi) and a bossy female cousin, Veronique (Catherine Jacob as a necessary irritant to the overly passive Isabelle), who tries to micro-manage both her medical career and her love life.

The film entertains even as it strains our patience with multiple layers of foreplay: Bambi's fainting spells, necophilia-tinged rape scenes with the victims clad as if posing for department-store underwear ads, operations where the patients remain awake, party games about a dream that's not a dream. This allows Marchand to endlessly defer the obvious climax, where Bambi has to face the hunter in the woods. Whether Bambi's fate will be as satisfying as her eerie journey, and whether you'll be rooting for her to cheat death, depends on your tolerance for movies whose reach ever-so-slightly exceeds their grasp. ▼



Mark Brian Smith and Tony Montana were part of Duffy's 'syndicate.'

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Return to the scene of the crime

by Victoria A. Brownworth

We were fortunate enough to spend Thanksgiving being festive with friends and family, and of course watching football and parades on the tube. We loved the new SpongeBob balloon in the Macy's parade — he is sooo gay.

There were some interesting events on TV this week, and the holiday shows will be premiering in earnest in the coming weeks. Bianca still doesn't have her baby back, and we can only hope for a Christmas miracle. *Law & Order: SVU* delivered one of its most fabulous and disturbing episodes in the franchise's entire history with a he-said/she-said rape case in which the audience was left to vote on the outcome, and even the detectives changed sides throughout. We believed the man was overwhelmingly guilty, but were shocked to go to the NBC website and find more than 70% found him innocent, which told us a great deal about rape in America.

We were also shocked to find 42% of American news viewers rate CBS's Dan Rather, after 24 years America's longest-running news anchor (even Walter Cronkite only had a 19-year run), as "poor" and biased. NBC's Tom Brokaw ranked first, with a 38% excellent rating; ABC's Peter Jennings received a 21% excellent rating.

ing, but Rather only garnered 18% in excellence.

Rather's obviously forced departure from CBS is a sad chapter in TV history. Rather will stay on at *60 Minutes* and do other reporting work, but it is obvious his head is the one to go for the Bush military-documents scandal. The most human and often the most humane of the big three anchors, Rather's quaint phrases and down-hominess will be missed. CBS exec Les Moonves is said to be looking at Fox ratings as he makes his choice for replacement, but our money is on long-time political reporter Scott Pelley.

Cold turkey

News of Rather was sad, Bianca still not having her baby was frustration, but nothing saddened and frustrated us more than the shock of a single TV program this week, ABC's 20/20 on November 26, which rammed home the cold reality of how America feels about queers like being slammed in the head with a 20-lb. frozen turkey.

Perhaps the show has simply changed too much with Barbara Walters gone. Say what you will about Walters and her journalistic decline precipitated by *The View*, she's still one hell of a reporter:

tough and unforgiving when it comes to the important questions. More importantly, she has a real sense of decency about her. There was no sense of decency about the Thanksgiving weekend edition of 20/20. It gave Black Friday a whole new meaning.

When is a hate crime not a hate crime? Apparently when 20/20, in their last ratings grab of sweeps month, says it isn't, and gets a few people to back their version of the tale, including one of America's foremost gay conservatives.

In October 1998, one of the most grisly murders in recent times happened outside Laramie, Wyoming (Dick Cheney's home state and political base). A 21-year-old college student at the University of Wyoming was savagely beaten, tied to a cattle fence crucifixion-style

and left for dead, until more than half a day later when a bicyclist found his near-lifeless body on the cold prairie.

It took five long days for Matthew Shepard to die from his injuries, which included 18 skull fractures. He never regained consciousness.

The case of Matthew Shepard drew international attention. Matt Shepard was gay, and it didn't take long for word of the most vicious hate crime since Brandon Teena's murder to spread. Vigils and marches were organized throughout the US and beyond. Reporter Jason Marsden, who covered the story for *The Casper Star-Tribune*, said, "We knew in the newsroom the day it happened, this is going to be a huge story, this is going to attract international interest. I remember one of my fellow reporters saying, 'This kid is going to be the new poster child for gay rights.'"

Soon, two other 21-year-olds

were charged in Shepard's murder. Aaron McKinney, the leader of the assault, and his friend Russell Henderson were at the Fireside bar with Shepard that night. The three left the bar together, and McKinney claims Shepard made a pass at him, and he hit him with a gun. Repeatedly. McKinney's defense at trial was gay panic: his fear of Shepard's advances made him snap and attack Shepard with a rage that resulted in Shepard's murder.

McKinney and Henderson were sentenced to two life sentences in Shepard's murder (one for the actual murder, one for the kidnapping). They will never be eligible for parole under the Wyoming system.

Those are the basic facts of the case of Matthew Shepard's brutal murder, and they are, frankly, immutable. But that did not stop 20/20 from presenting a very different picture that indicted the victim and queer rights advocates, and pleaded sympathy for the killers, who were portrayed as tragic figures caught in the mesh of dangerous drugs and the violence that accompanies that lifestyle. Throughout, anchor Elizabeth Vargas repeatedly referred to the facts of Shepard's death as "mythologizing" his murder as a hate crime.

Eighteen skull fractures. Facial lacerations requiring nearly 1,000 stitches. Lips horribly mangled by being slammed with a gun butt into his teeth and braces. Shepard's murderer, Aaron McKinney, says he used the butt of his gun "like a baseball bat" against Shepard's skull.

Off balance

For the past few months, ABC has been running promos for its news shows as "accurate" and "balanced." Those promos came in response to the flap over at CBS over allegedly forged documents related to George W. Bush's murky military service. As part of its Thanksgiving holiday programming, 20/20 purported to tell the "real" story about the Shepard murder, but in their "accurate" and "balanced" reportage, they left out a few salient points.

According to sources close to the Shepard trial, Judy and Dennis Shepard pleaded for the life of McKinney, who otherwise would have been sentenced to death. In exchange for their testimony on behalf of his life, there would be a gag order imposed on both McKinney and Henderson as part of the sentencing plea. Neither convicted murderer would discuss the case that had so shattered the Shepard family. That gag order was broken with the airing of 20/20, but Vargas neglected to mention it.

Nor did Vargas seem particularly concerned over the conflicting elements of McKinney's new claims, which are that he killed Shepard in a botched robbery, not because of the queer fear upon which his defense was predicated; and that his rage at Shepard was fueled by drugs, not homophobia. In fact, Vargas seemed eerily unperturbed by the grisly retelling of the murder by McKinney, and never grilled him on the inconsistencies. She also was oddly unmoved by the obvious remorse of Henderson, who did not participate in the actual murder but did nothing to stop it. She never asked him to elaborate on the murder as McKinney did, which might have illuminated a different perspective on the killing.

20/20 detailed McKinney and Henderson's disturbed childhoods. Henderson had been seriously abused throughout his childhood and was eventually removed from his home by protective services. McKinney's mother had died from a botched surgery when he was 16, and he became a meth addict as he blew through the \$100,000 malpractice award he received at her death.

The program contended that the reason McKinney murdered Shepard was that he suffered from drug-induced rage. McKinney's girlfriend, Kristen Price, who told 20/20 back in October '98 that her boyfriend and father of her infant son had killed Shepard because Shepard had made a pass at him and wanted to "teach him a lesson," now tells ABC that she lied. It was all about drugs and getting money for drugs.

Yet when McKinney was relating the events of that night to Vargas, he asserted that Shepard had put a hand on his thigh in the car and propositioned him. McKinney had then struck him with the gun, repeatedly. That sounds pretty much like a hate crime, no matter how it's dissected: McKinney, enraged by the pass, killed Shepard because he was gay. That McKinney may have been on drugs at the time could have exacerbated that rage, perhaps, but not changed the incipient reason for the murder: Shepard's gayness.

Vargas interviewed many people for the show, including Judy Shepard; the last of Shepard's friends to see him alive, Tina LaBrie; the limo driver Tom "Doc" O'Connor, who took Shepard and LaBrie to a gay bar in Fort Collins, Colorado the night of the murder; prosecutor Cal Ruchard; the sheriff; and conservative gay writer Andrew Sullivan.

Our own questions

Why did ABC choose to tell this story six years after Shepard's murder, on Thanksgiving weekend, a traditional family-time? What was the purpose of their new details, all of which served to make the victim less sympathetic and the killers more so? Could ABC be guilty of homophobia?

Vargas elicited in interviews from many that the killers and Shepard were acquaintances. According to them, McKinney knew Shepard well because, like McKinney and Henderson, Shepard was a meth addict. According to Shepard's mother, Matt had been raped in Morocco when he was 18. That had left him emotionally scarred, which may have led to his drug use. LaBrie and Doc told Vargas that Shepard told them right before his death that he was HIV-positive. Doc told Vargas that on the night of his murder, Shepard said that he was suicidal over his diagnosis. Doc and Price also told Vargas that McKinney wasn't anti-gay, that he was in fact bisexual. Price said McKinney regularly attempted to get the two of them into threesomes with another man; Doc said McKinney participated in a threesome with him and his girlfriend.

Conversely, McKinney told Vargas he never had sex with a man and was not bisexual. Yet if McKinney is indeed a closet bisexual unable to admit his desires for other men, doesn't that internalized homophobia add more fuel rather than less to the hate-crime aspect of the case?

The lack of remorse from McKinney was absolutely chilling,

next page ►

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Boys on paper

by Robert Julian

Fresh Men: New Voices in Gay Fiction, edited by Donald Weise; Carroll & Graf, \$14

Twenty previously unpublished authors get a chance to strut their literary stuff in the new prose anthology *Fresh Men*, a publication that is something of a "juried exhibition" since the stories were selected by author Edmund White. With a wide range of prose styles and subject matter, these new authors provide a cornucopia of gay experience that contains something for everyone. But it is equally safe to say that few readers will experience the varied contributors with equal delight.

The challenge of the short story is creating a believable context and characters in a short

space. The curse of the genre is the unfortunate tendency of short stories to be relegated to the dustbin of literary history, primarily because they are such small prose morsels that they fail to leave an impression. The challenge for all the writers in *Fresh Men* is to see if they can summon their skills to go the prose distance, and craft longer, more memorable works that will stand the test of time.

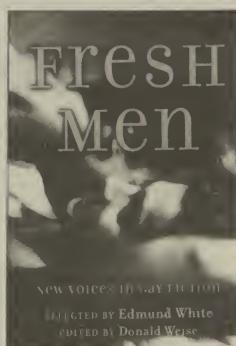
In "American Widow," Philip Huang shows great promise with his rendering of a female author reeling headlong toward the abyss, while trying to cope with loss, grief and the emptiness of fame. Huang's prose style is spare and complex, with deep emotional currents simmering beneath the surface. More traditional prose styles are reflected in Robert Hughes' "The Inadvertent Headshot" and Reed Hearne's "TV Dinner." The former deals with the

gay offspring of alcoholic, third-rate actors, and the latter explores the travails of a gay waiter who stars in a TV reality series. Joel Barraquel Tan's "Rondo" tells an unusual tale of a morbidly obese gay barrio drug-dealer and his young sidekick. The simple, unexpected conclusion of "Rondo" reveals surprising introspection and insight into human nature.

Unrequited gay love plays out against a Montreal backdrop in Mathew Fox's "Advanced Soaring." Barry McCrea hooks the reader with the opening line of "Abracadabra," which begins, "The summer after I left the cult...." Adolescent gay rape is brutally portrayed in Will Fabro's "First Sex," but in "Ground Control," Patrick Ryan takes a similar scenario to a lovely place of healing and bonding between two brothers. In Scott D. Pomfret's "Chicken," an older gay man be-

comes obsessed with a manipulative teen hustler; and in "The Enemy at Bay," Bob Guter follows a bored gay couple in New York as they peruse the "personals" and prepare to expand their horizons.

Taken as a group, the contributors to *Fresh Men* offer a solid collection of intelligent observations about gay men in contemporary times or the recent past. Although some of the portraits are not particularly flattering, the reflection of the gay male experience benefits more from this warts-and-all honesty than it does from the

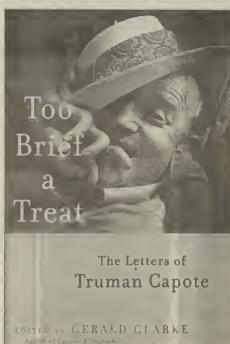


iconic images on the pages of an Abercrombie & Fitch catalog. ▼

Queer books

◀ Arts cover

York. *Too Brief a Treat: The Letters of Truman Capote* (Random House, \$27.95), edited by his biographer Gerald Clarke, provides a fascinating glimpse of the openly gay *enfant terrible*. Capote's jealousy often clouded his judgment; after reading *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* and seeing *The Rose Tattoo*, he dismissed Ten-



The Letters of Truman Capote

Edited by GERALD CLARKE

Capote would probably find Gilles Neret's *Homo Art* (Taschen, \$14.95) "vulgar," which would be his loss. Neret has compiled homoerotic images from ancient Greece to Persia, to feudal Japan, to Victorian England, and contemporary David Hockney. The universality of men doing what comes naturally with other men disproves all the bigotry spouted by homophobic evangelicals.

Murder mysteries are great for holiday travelers, especially helpful during delays. Among new releases of interest to gay readers is Michael Craft's latest Mark Manning adventure, *Bitch Slap* (St. Martin's, \$23.95). This time, society reporter Glee Savage is accused of murdering the town's richest, most obnoxious woman. For those who like mysteries set in the ancient world, Steven Saylor's engaging *Giordanus the Finder* series is hard to beat. In *Judgment of Caesar* (St. Martin's, \$24.95), our hero is caught in the midst of Julius and Cleopatra's political ambitions while searching for his son. Saylor knows his history, and superbly recaptures the turbulent world of Ancient Rome.

Readers interested in Ancient Greece will love the late lesbian author Mary Renault's unequalled re-creation of that world, including its strong homoerotic relationships. Vantage has reissued her oeuvre in quality paperbacks, all \$14. *The Last of the Wine*, her first success, is set during the Peloponnesian War and is a vivid, moving coming-of-age story of a handsome youth, centered around his love affair with a slightly older male. *The Bull from*

the Sea and *The King Must Die* are exciting re-tellings of the Theseus myth. *The Mask of Apollo* explores the Greek theatre and Plato's politics from an actor's perspective. *Fire from Heaven*, *The Persian Boy* and *Funeral Games* are imaginative recreations of Alexander the Great's life. *The Praise Singer* is about male lovers Harmodios and Aristogeiton, who overthrew Athenian tyrant Pisistratus and were honored by grateful citizens with their statue near the Temple of Olympian Zeus. Like Saylor, Renault makes history come alive as few writers ever have. ▼

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Lavender Tube

◀ previous page

while the intense remorse of Henderson was poignant, particularly considering Henderson did not participate in the actual murder. McKinney's only remorse was for Henderson, who he said didn't deserve to be sharing his sentence because he didn't commit the crime.

TV isn't just an entertainment vehicle, and shows like 20/20 bear a responsibility for more than accuracy in their reportage. The tragedy of Shepard's brutal murder was virtually ignored in the program, but for queer Americans, that murder was a watershed event. Suddenly, we all knew how very unsafe we were. The hideous scenes of Shepard's funeral re-

played on 20/20, with the vitriolic attacks by homophobic evangelical Rev. Fred Phelps and his followers leading a tearful Dennis Shepard, in a bullet-proof vest, to lament that his son's mourning could not be done without anti-gay venom surrounding the family, were a reminder of how terrible those days following Shepard's murder were for queers.

It is not, as Vargas claims and Sullivan perhaps unwittingly codifies, "mythologizing" to call the murder of Matthew Shepard a hate crime, for that is, undeniably, irrevocably, what it was. Henderson made that clear in his haunting code on the murder as he told Vargas, "For a long time, I thought that his death wasn't my fault. And then, as time has gone on, I got a better

page 38 ▶

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Big man on campus

by Jim Piechota

I Am Charlotte Simmons by Tom Wolfe; Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$28.95

If you enjoy reading thick, hulking novels about thick, hulking college boys with potty mouths and ever-ready hard-ons, Tom Wolfe's book is perfect for you. It is the culmination of months of intense observation by the esteemed author and chronicler of the human condi-

tion who penned such gems as *The Bonfires of the Vanities* and *A Man in Full*. Wolfe reportedly infiltrated the lush campuses of Harvard and the University of Florida, donning an inconspicuous blue blazer and trying to fit in. Yeah, right. He watched the puking, the wooing, the swearing, the jockstrapped athletics of the boys, and the catty, bitchy, privileged, L'oreal-I'm-worth-it attitude of the long-haired girls — most incarcerated in fraternity and sorority houses so soggy with sex they resembled bathhouses.

All that and much more is packed into Wolfe's 676-page tome about the ultimate college experience of Charlotte Simmons, a nubile, virginal freshman from tiny Sparta, North Carolina, who nervously twitches her way through the courtyards and bedrooms of fictional Dupont University. After weeks of witnessing "shocking" collegiate behavior (that's anything but), she settles into the sweet reality that she's being courted in assorted fashion by three suitors: Jojo, a flexing, testosterone-packed tree-stump of a basketball star; Adam, a wimpy campus-newspaper writer; and Hoyt, a short-tempered frat boy supreme.

Since college life isn't all boners and boom boxes all the time, Charlotte does her best to fit into a world where girls who hover around frat houses are known as "cum dumpsters." Guys prefer a proto-language known as "fuck



patois," where the f-word is used as verb, noun, adjective, adverb, slur, and, of course, the utilitarian alternative for intercourse, the ultimate reward (besides beer) for living and breathing at Dupont University. Charlotte finally aligns herself with friends and a plan to get on top of the student body in more ways than one, as when she loses her virginity to Hoyt during one of the book's best scenes.

Wolfe keeps his plot themes

basic: collegiate athletes getting breaks on grades, racial tolerance on the playing fields, oversensitive gay revolutionaries, culture clashes, and an exposed scandal involving the Governor of California getting a blow job from a female student on the campus green. Well, then there's the homophobic scene toward the end where an event called "Stand Up Straight for Gay Day" turns into a name-calling free-for-all. Thanks, just what this book needed, Tom.

But Wolfe doesn't tell us anything about college students that we don't already know, he's just dusted off and re-varnished the old *Animal House* standby. Ultimately, this novel amounts to an overstuffed box of literary junk-candy that seems fated to suffer the same iffy shelf life as those *Desperate Housewives*. But the key here is not to take it all too seriously, since doing so can leach the fun out of just about anything. ▼

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Flintstone

◀ Arts cover

remains my favorite night of the whole run."

While Flintstone has appeared in other shows with audience participation, ask her if any other production reminds her of the *Dance-Along*, and you get an interesting response.

"Are you joking? No!" she answered, a touch emphatically. "Can you imagine the audience jumping up and dancing onstage at the theater?"

Although Flintstone (aka Joe Collins) is best known for her over-the-top characters, like Liberace in *Gross Indulgence: The Trials of Liberace* and Meredith Garcia Lopez Silberstein Fong in *Acid Housewife*, she is also an accomplished actor in serious roles, and arranges and/or composes much of her own music. She's listed as collaborating on the music for *Burning Louise*, a new musical developed for Not Quite Opera's 2003 Fall Feast, in which she appeared as one of the two title characters. She arranged all the music for *The Andrews Sisters at the Hollywood Canteen*. She even admits, in confessional, coming-out language, that she played trombone in high school.

"Music is in my blood," Flintstone said. "I have no option but to incorporate what I hear in my head into what I perform in public. I do very little non-singing theatre or performing, and even when I do non-vocal roles, I examine the script as a score. I look for the various movements and tempo changes, the coloring."

High heeled

This year's *Dance-Along* will be the fifth San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band production in which Flintstone has appeared. In 1999 and again at the



Trauma Flintstone (aka Joe Collins), out of drag: music is in his blood.

band's 25th anniversary celebration, she brought *Dance-Along* audiences to their feet with her performance of "Chanukah in Santa Monica." She competed in the Drag Race at the band's 20th anniversary festival at Yerba Buena Gardens, and showed up with Carmen Miranda as a special guest at the gala performance of the 2003 *Dance-Along*. What keeps her coming back?

"I am a Band Hag. I say it loud, and I say it proud," she said. "There's always a rush when you see and hear the band marching down the street during a parade. But in the past few years, I've really become enthralled with the concerts, and especially with the programming."

"I heartily encourage our audiences to bring their children to hear the Band perform at concerts during the course of the year," said Flintstone. "With the arts being removed from public schools, every chance a parent has to introduce their children to music, theatre, dance and art is essential."

An eclectic cast joins Flintstone on the Yerba Buena Forum floors. Conducted by the Free-

dom Band's Artistic Director Jaidine Louie, the show was choreographed by San Francisco Opera Ballet and San Francisco Ballet veteran Carolyn Carvalj. Mark Sargent, who has performed often with Flintstone in *The Andrews Sisters' Hollywood Canteen*, *Christamas with the Crawfords* and *Acid Housewife*, plays Red Ridinghood to Flintstone's big bad wolf. Jose Carlos dances as Prince Charming opposite Carvalj's Cinderella. The Dixieland Dykes +3 stomp and ramble their way through trad-jazz tunes for the Gala reception. All this hoopla is set against the backdrop of the Freedom Band's performance of live music, costumed in storybook fashion.

The *Dance-Along Nutcracker* takes place 2:30 & 7 p.m. on Saturday, December 4; and 11 a.m. & 3 p.m. on Sunday, December 5, at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. Information: (415) 255-1355 or www.sflgb.org. ▼

Heidi Beeler is a freelance writer who has played trumpet with the San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band since 1991.

Lavender Tube

◀ page 37

understanding to know that I could have prevented it and I could have stopped it, but I didn't. Matthew died because I didn't stop it."

Henderson told Vargas, "I'm sorry to the Shepard family. They've had the hardest of all this. I'm sorry to the nation as a whole, because this affected a lot of people, and I wish every day I could change or fix it."

Former Laramie Police Cmdr. Dave O'Malley said of new claims by McKinney that drugs were the culprit in the crime: "I don't buy it at all. I feel comfortable in my own heart that they did what they did to Matt because they [had] hated toward him for being gay."

Judy Shepard, who saved the life of her son's killer, was succinct. "There were a lot of things going

on that night, and hate was one of them, and they murdered my son, ultimately. Anything else we find out just doesn't change that fact."

No, it doesn't. Protests to ABC and 20/20 can be sent to audience relations at ABC at netaudr@abc.com, and to the producers of 20/20 at 2020@abc.com. Or call ABC at (818) 460-7477. For more info on Matthew Shepard, go to www.matthewshepard.org. ▼

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BAY AREA REPORTER

OUT & ABOUT

Calendare

by Mark Mardon



A boy and his beloved pet snail.



The Courage Group perform at Jon Sims Center for the Arts. See Friday.

to *Where the Wild Things Are*. While the Band performs *Nutcracker* favorites such as "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" and "Waltz of the Flowers," sugar plum wannabes leap and pirouette about the dance floor. Tutus, rentals and fair wands available. Joining the cast are "lipstick pianist" Trauma Flintstone (seen most recently in NCTC's *Pageant*) and Mark Sargent (Andrews Sisters; *Acid Housewife*). At the Gala Opening Reception, the Dixieland Dykes + 3 will stomp, ramble and wail through jazz tunes. *Dance-Along Nutcracker* happens on Sat., Dec. 4 at 2:30 & 7pm (Gala Show & Reception), and Sun. Dec. 5 at 11am & 3pm. \$40 Gala Night Show with holiday reception. \$21 afternoon shows. \$15 children/seniors. Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 701 Mission St. Tix: 415-978-ARTS. Info: 415-255-1355; www.sfgfb.org

Really Rosie @ NCTC

New Conservatory Theatre Center presents the musical *Really Rosie*, a delight for children and parents alike, with book/lyrics by Marice Sendak, with music by Carole King. Directed & choreographed by Stephanie Temple; musical direction by Eric Cole. The cast is made up of current and former Youth Theatre Conservatory students. \$9 youth (18 & under); \$12 adults; discounts for groups of 15 or more. 2pm & 4pm Sun., 2pm Sun. Plays thru Dec. 30. NCTC, 25 Van Ness Ave. Tix: 415-861-0872; www.nctcsf.org

Helem IndependAIDS Party @ Medjool Lounge/Restaurant

IndependAIDS, a fundraiser for Helem (Lebanese Protection for LGBTQ+ a queer center in Beirut, Lebanon) for their HIV/AIDS campaign in Lebanon. An Exciting Night Including: Arabian Knights band; Hip hop Arab artists TRU BLOO & Mazen. Slide Show, Dance, Food, Cash bar. Prizes! Co-sponsors: ADC-SF (American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee) DJ Raffy Sheek Image Arabian Knights Medjool & SWANABEQ (Southwest Asian North & African Bay Area Queers) \$10-\$30 sliding donation. 8pm. Wheelchair accessible. Medjool Lounge/Restaurant, 2524 Mission St. Info: 510-839-4443; www.helem.org

Matri Benefit

Matri (pronounced "My Tree") is a Sanskrit word meaning "loving kindness/compassionate friendship." This Saturday, December 4, 2004, in conjunction with World AIDS Day, Matri will host an event to help children with AIDS in Asia and Africa and those who have been orphaned by AIDS. The event, started by a Matri resident four years ago, continues to grow. Last year, more than 350 new toys were donated to send to needy kids for the holidays. In many cases, these toys are the only presents a child may receive. Those attending are asked to donate a new, lightweight toy that does not require batteries or to make a suggested \$15 donation toward the purchase of a gift. Open to the public from 1:30-3:30pm at Matri, 401 Duboce Ave. Info: 415-558-3003; www.matri.org

Senior Prom
@ Billy DeFrank Center, San Jose
 Have you ever been to a Prom, did you miss your senior prom? Come and join the Vintage Seniors this Saturday, December 4th from 1-

4pm. They will have dance music through the decades, live entertainment, food and loads of fun. This Prom is designed for Seniors 50+, but is open to all ages. The Billy DeFrank Center, 938 The Alameda, San Jose. Info: Ron at 408-293-3040 x118; www.defrank.org

Tina's Café @ Magnet

Going out to party tonight? Spend the early part of your evening with the boys from *Tweaker.org*. Tom Orr will be singing special holiday favorites, and DJ Steve Fabus will spin tunes. Free. 8-10pm. Magnet, 4122 18th St.

Wilde Chats @ Three Bill Café

Join Wilde Chats, a gay discussion group that meets twice a month as they explore core questions and issues facing gay men in SF. Look for hidden assumptions, embedded concepts, and differences sometimes not apparent in the problems we see and in the questions we ask ourselves as gay men and members of the gay "community". 11am. SF LGBT Center, 1800 Market St.

PanTease @ 848

PanTease: The 848 Burlesque Revue, featuring entertainment by Big Burlesque; Burlesque-esque; The Diamond Diggers; Harlem Shake Burlesque; and 848's own No Knockers Burlesque. \$12-\$20. 8:30pm doors; 9pm show. 848 Divisadero St. at (McAllister). Res: 415-922-2385.

Estate Sale @ Marlene's Basement

For Sale: Jewelry, Hand Bags and Shoes from Empress 24 Pat Montclar's Estate. Items for sale may be viewed the week prior to the sale. 8pm-11pm? Marlene's Basement, 488 Hayes St (btwn Octavia & Gough).

Army-Navy Football Game @ The Mix

The Castro Chapter of Naval Academy alumni want you to get riled up about Army-Navy '04! They have elected to stay in The Castro instead of braving the cold of Philadelphia, and invite you to join them as they cheer for Navy (or Army, if you must!). Uniforms, cheerleaders, and drag welcome. No cover. Kickoff time: 11:30am. The Mix, 4086 18th St. Info: 415-750-7648.

Open House @ Small Press Distribution, Berkeley

Small Press Distribution, a true gem of the local literary scene, invites all to their Holiday Open House & Book Sale. Readings by Guest of Honor, poet, translator and National Book Award finalist Col Swenson; Richard Harris, presenting East Bay M.U.D.'s new gardening book for the SF Bay region; scholar Jacques Deneulin reading from Ghanaian novelist & poet Akyi Kwei Armah; novelist, SF State professor and garden columnist Robert Glück; poet novelist and Mills college teacher Laynie Browne. Free. 12 noon-4pm (readings at 2pm). 10-50% off all books. SPD, 1341 17th St. (at Gilman), Berkeley. Info: 510-524-1668; www.spdbooks.org

SF Camerawork Auction

@ Hosfelt Gallery
 SF Camerawork invites you to attend their Annual Benefit Auction of Vintage and Contemporary Photographs. Auction begins at 1pm with auctioneer Dale Stulz.

Harold's End

On a recent warm, wonderful literary night at City Lights Bookstore in North Beach, some extraordinary people got up and read parts of literary wunderkind JT LeRoy's latest book, a novella titled *Harold's End*, richly illustrated by Australian artist Cherry Hood (www.cherryhood.com.au). The place was packed; the store isn't that big but it's got loads of literary history. Of course JT was not present (the shy lad was reportedly home recovering from the stress of a reading in NYC), and since I wasn't expecting him to be, I wasn't disappointed. I knew some great people would be there. I recognized some of his crowd from having been to Thistle shows (JT's band). But this is really the closest I've been to JT's "crowd," if he has such a thing. Everyone was deeply respectful, readers and listeners alike. The line-up of people reading was: Monique Everhart, Tim Donnelly, Daphne Gottlieb, Tara Jepsen, Horehound Stillpoint, and Sherilyn Connally (in that order). These are all local literary/poetry celebs; it's the first time I've heard several of them in person though I've been aware of them for ages. Daphne Gottlieb has long been a favorite of mine and she delivered a wallop when she read. She's got so much passion and poetic angst and fascinating cadences and quirky hand gestures and that tattooed heart in the center of her chest — always visible when she's reading, thanks to her low cut tops; it just sort of pounded as she read and you could tell she was putting her real heart into it. Sherilyn Connally blew me away she was so dynamic and gorgeous and a real Star presence. Tim Donnelly was maybe the quietest, but somehow in his quiet way he connected with the material and made it very real. I'd never encountered Monique Everhart before but she had that sultry look and style that you just knew JT would respond to. Tara I've heard of often, and Horehound too, but this was my first time seeing/hearing them and they were outstanding. The whole bunch clearly connected with the material, and though it wasn't JT's voice we were hearing, or his cadences, it was his art. We were all immersed in his art and it was a great feeling, like being in a hottub for a long time with really sexy people.

And what's the book about? Well, it's a local tale of a lost kid on Polk Street who takes up with a generous Castro queen with a kinky desire, who gifts our hero with a pet snail, thereby changing the kid's life forever. ▼

Fri 3

Courage Group @ Jon Sims Center

AIRspace at Jon Sims Center for the Arts (JSC) presents the Courage Group exploring the role of the social outcast in modern society using impressions from dreams both sleeping and waking. In the premiere, *hi anital*, Choreographer/Artistic Director Todd Courage draws from the American High School experience to create imagery that touches on alienation, individualism and the pressure of living in a society that values conformity. The Queen identity becomes a manifestation of an individual's journey towards authenticity. Also featuring repertory pieces *prety/ugly* and *Three Systems of Disorientation*, \$10-\$15 sliding (NOTAFLOR). 8pm. JSC, 1519 Mission St. Info: 415-545-0402; www.jonsimsc.org

Kinsey Sicks: Oh Vey in a Manger! @ NCTC
 America's Favorite Dragapella Beauty Shop Quartet return to New Conservatory Theatre Center with their holiday hit, *Kinsey Sicks: Oh Vey in a Manger!* This year, four stars shine over Bethlehem as the Kinsey Sicks deploy their biting musical wit and over-the-top drag in the global effort to stamp out holiday cheer. Featuring Ben Schatz as "Rachel," Irwin Keller as "Winnie," Chris Dilley as "Trampolina" and Jeff Manabat as "Trixie" \$25-\$35. Wed.-Fri. 8pm; Sat. & New year's Eve at 7:30pm & 10pm. Thurs. Dec. 31 (no shows Dec. 24 & 25). NCTC, 25 Van Ness Ave. Tixinfo: 415-861-8972; www.nctcsf.org

Langston Hughes' Black Nativity @ Lorraine Hansberry Theatre

The Lorraine Hansberry Theatre continues in 24th season with its perennial holiday hit, Langston Hughes' *Black Nativity*, featuring award-winning gospel singer Robin Hodge-Williams (*Show Me; Anoint Me*) and many of the Bay Area's leading gospel artists. Hughes' gospel songs play is a soulful rendition of the Christmas story with extraordinary voices, exciting dance and glorious music. As always, new songs and staging have been added. \$25-\$30 Thu & Fri; \$27-\$32 Sat & Sun. 8pm (4pm Sun). Show runs thru Dec. 19, 620 Sutter St. (at Mason). Tixinfo: 415-474-8800; www.lhth.org

The Santaland Diaries @ Shelton Theater

The Santaland Diaries by David Sedaris, adapted for the stage by Joe Mantello. Directed by Richard Ryan. Starring John Michael Beck and Cathy Fithian. David Sedaris' brilliant evocation of Christmas as seen from the other side, through the eyes of a Macy's elf, returns to the Shelton. Our hero, David the elf, will have you bawling over with laughter. San Francisco actor John Michael

Beck returns to fill the pointed shoes of everyone's favorite elf for the third straight year! Plus: *Seasor's Greetings*. Follow the tale of a housewife whose Christmas traditions are slowly being altered against her will. Just how far will she go to return things to the proper order? \$20 General Admission. 8pm Thu-Sat; 2pm & 7pm Sun. Thru Dec. 19. Shelton Theater, 533 Sutter St. (at Powell), Tix: 415-820-1565; www.steinbeckpresents.org

Princess Bride: the Play @ Dark Room
 What happens when the Most Beautiful Woman in the World marries the Handsome Prince in the World—and he turns out to be a son of a bitch? Fighting, Fighting, True Love, Strong Hate, Harsh Revenge, Lots of Bad Men, Lots of Good Men, Some Beautiful Women, Beasties Monstrous and Gentle, Some Sweet Escapes and Captures, Death, Lies, Truth and a little sex abounding in *Princess Bride: The Play*, Impossible Production's tribute to the hottest fairy tale ever written. All we need is a Miracle. Directed by Cameron Eng & Jim Fourniadis and produced by Erin Ohannesson & Cameron Eng. Starring: Don Wood, Nancy Bower, Josh Lenn, John Filgas, Mark Para, Cameron Eng, Jim Fourniadis, Seanetta, Laura Drus, and Patrick Biggs. \$15 at the door; \$12.50 at www.acteva.com/go/improb Fridays and Saturdays @ 8pm; Sundays @ 3pm. December 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18 and 19. The Dark Room Theater, 2263 Mission St (btwn 18th & 19th). Info: www.darkrooms.org

Irene Soderberg @ Rainbow Room, The Depot, Napa
 Irene Soderberg, alternately called the "one woman hurricane" and "Indians Jones in a sequin gown," will perform at Napa's Rainbow Room in one night only performance. With three CD's to her credit ("Goodnight Irene," "I'm Gonna Live LIVE" and her latest "A Song in my Heart") Soderberg regularly performs to sell-out audiences in New York, San Francisco, Provincetown, Palm Springs, Los Angeles and Chicago. She has opened for show business notables Willie Nelson, Pat Benatar, Chaka Khan, Hootie and the Blowfish, Thelma Houston, Grace Slick and Judy Tenuta. Tix: 806 Fourth St. Napa. Info: 707-252-4477.

Come Fly With Me Nude @ EXIT Theatre

domella productions presents: *Come Fly With Me Nude*, a comedy by Diane Karagiannis and Todd Pickering. The duo star as Mutual Muses Dom Casual & Bella Hagen who passionately believe that the importance of their art far outweighs their limitations as artists. Inspired by Ann Margaret, The Exorcist, Federico Fellini, Bob Fosse and The Ice Capades, they interpret their poignant stories of childhoods, and how their meeting in SF changed their lives, and quite pos-

sibly the future of art. \$15-\$20. 8pm, Plays Dec. 2-4, 10 & 11, and 15-18. Two shows Dec. 11 at 2pm & 8pm. EXIT Theatre, 156 Eddy St. (btwn Mason/Taylor). Tix/info: 415-956-1737; www.ticketweb.com; www.nctcsf.org

Instant City Launch Party @ Adobe Bookshop

Launched party/fundraiser for *Instant City: A literary exploration of San Francisco*, a project that aims to capture, through printing, works of fiction, nonfiction and visual artwork the frenetic energy of SF, and in doing so to create a subversive ever-changing map of the city. Featuring readings by contributors Sara Jaffe (formerly of Erase Errata); Kathi Kamen Goldmark (novelist & ringleader of the Rock Bottom Remainders); James Tracy (political activist/Community leader); and Charles Gatewood (documentary photographer of three decades of SF's subculture). Free. 7:30-10:30pm. Adobe Bookshop, 3166 16th St. Info: 415-864-3936.

Sat 4
SF Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band's Dance-Along Nutcracker™ @ YBCA
 The San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band, under the baton of Artistic Director Jadian Louie, perform *Once Upon A Tutu* — the 2004 edition of the band's wacky *Dance-Along Nutcracker™* sensation, where the audience concords its own choreography. Says Louie: "The *Dance-Along Nutcracker*, a show that invites the audience into the program, is at its core a celebration of fantasy and dreamscapes, qualities all children's stories share," from E.T.A. Hoffmann's *The Nutcracker* and the Mouse King, upon which the original 19th century ballet is based, to *Harold and the Purple Crayon*,

an event to help children with AIDS in Asia and Africa and those who have been orphaned by AIDS. The event, started by a Matri resident four years ago, continues to grow. Last year, more than 350 new toys were donated to send to needy kids for the holidays. In many cases, these toys are the only presents a child may receive. Those attending are asked to donate a new, lightweight toy that does not require batteries or to make a suggested \$15 donation toward the purchase of a gift. Open to the public from 1:30-3:30pm at Matri, 401 Duboce Ave. Info: 415-558-3003; www.matri.org

Senior Prom @ Billy DeFrank Center, San Jose
 Have you ever been to a Prom, did you miss your senior prom? Come and join the Vintage Seniors this Saturday, December 4th from 1-



The Pacific Mozart Ensemble & Aurora Theatre Co. present The Play of Daniel at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Berkeley. See Tuesday.

David Allen

Nationally and regionally known photographers, galleries and art dealers will contribute prints from the likes of Michael Light, Mona Kuhn, Dorothea Lange, Jacques Henri Lartigue, Tetsu Okuhara and many others. Admission is by Auction Catalog only, available for \$15 members/\$20 gen'l public at Camerawork, 430 Clementina St. (btwn 5th/6th, Howard/Folsom). Info: 415-863-1001; www.sfcamerawork.org

Sun

Help is on the Way for the Holidays VI

@ Herbst Theatre

The Richmond/Ermet AIDS Foundation presents *Help is on the Way for the Holidays VI*, with an all-star line-up of performers from Broadway, film, TV, recording, jazz and dance. Pre-show silent auction (5:30-7:30pm). Post-performance party with the cast in the Green Room (9:30-11pm). Featuring Cate Caplin & Gary Franco (int'l ballroom dance champs); Connie Champagne (revered local cabaret/recording diva); Spencer Day (local jazz/pop phenomenon surging toward the big time); Loretta Devine (*Dreamgirls*; *Waiting to Exhale*; *Boston Public TV*); Jill Eikenberry & Michael Tucker (Emmy Award winning LA Law stars); Tim Rock-

munity's finest. Original entertainment; silent auction; home-style cooking & cheering spirits. Volunteer-of-the-year award. All welcome, leather or not. Proceeds benefit the Positive Resource Center assisting people affected by or at risk for HIV/AIDS. \$20 adv; \$25 door, 11am-1pm. Tix at The Edge Bar, 4149 18th St. Info: www.sfkineque.com; www.positiveresource.org

Ruby's Clay Studio Pottery Sale @ Hall of Flowers, GG Park

From salad bowls to garden statues, from lamps to vases, from mugs to idols — you will find something for everyone on your list as Ruby's Clay Studio, a Castro institution, kicks off the Holiday Season with a one-day pottery show and sale in the Hall of Flowers in Golden Gate Park. 25 local ceramic artists will feature their works. You will find rock-bottom prices as these original pieces are sold directly from the artist to you. 9am-4pm. Hall of Flowers, County Fair Bldg., Golden Gate Park at 9th Ave. entrance. Info: 415-437-1642.

Anna Furtado @ Change Makers Books, Oakland

Reading of new lesbian fiction from Anna Furtado, *The Heart's Desire*, the story of a Renaissance healer and a beautiful noblewoman. Free. 2-4pm. Change Makers Books & Gifts for Women, 6536 Telegraph Ave. (4 blocks south of Ashby, on corner of 6th & Telegraph), Oakland. Info: 510-655-2405;



Daniel Games

Diane Karagienakos and Todd Pickering get kinky in *Come Fly With Me Nude* at EXIT Theatre. See Friday.

who together create one of the largest and most diverse holiday choruses in the world. Plus: The San Francisco Conservatory of Music Orchestra and student soloists, who train for their performances in the Messiah as part of their SFCM collegiate curriculum. Acclaimed guest conductor Bruce Lamott will again lead a full Davies Symphony Hall audience in singing Handel's timeless 1741 choral masterpiece. \$20-\$49. 8pm. Davies Symphony Hall, 201 Van Ness Ave. Info: 415-759-3429; www.sfcfm.org

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Tue 7

The Play of Daniel @ St. Mark's Episcopal, Berkeley

The Pacific Mozart Ensemble opens its 2004-05 season by reprising last year's successful collaboration with Aurora Theatre Company, *The Play of Daniel*. This 12th-century liturgical drama, co-directed by PME Music Director Richard Grant and Dunbar H. Osgood, Professor Emeritus of Drama at UC Berkeley, is approached as theatrical, muscular and compelling storytelling. With the hour-long play, King Belshazzar's downfall is predicted by Daniel's interpretation of the writing on the wall; Belshazzar is murdered; King Darius is installed and Daniel is appointed his principal councilor; jealous nobles plot Daniel's downfall and he is thrown to the lions; an angel saves him in the nick of time and he prophesies the coming of the Lord. \$25 gen'l; \$22 Aurora subscribers. 8pm Dec. 6-11. 2300 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. Tix: 510-843-4622; www.auroratheatre.org

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Wed 8

Got Milk for the Holidays @ The Edge

Cabaret Diva Irene Soderberg will present *Got Milk for the Holidays* at The Edge bar in the Castro. Having played gigs from her home base in West Hollywood. Funds raised from the \$7 beer/soda bust and raffle will support the effort to put a bronze bust of Harvey Milk in San Francisco's City Hall. The planned memorial will be similar in likeness to the bronze sculptures of historic figures and former San Francisco mayors which

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Sean Cribbin takes Toronto by storm

by Mister Marcus

The holiday season surges forward with parties both public and private, shows, fundraisers, farewells and greeting tourists — the never-ending stream of people from the "provinces" who come to Fagdad-by-the-Bay to savor the many, many delights (both gay and straight) of the City of Saint Francis.

Action in Toronto

The leather tribe traveled across the border into Canada last weekend to witness the Mr. Leather Toronto 2005 contest when IML 1st runner-up Remi Collette passed the sash to a successor. There eight men were vying for the title under the appraising eyes of judges Remi Collette, Ernie Lacasse, Gloria McIsaac, Murray Lavigne, Chuck Brackett, Jo Romano-Blas and Peter Kinchloe. IML 1979 David Kloss served as the MC along with

hilariously funny stand-up comic Elvira Kurt.

The seven participating contestants were Cameron Lewis, Sean Cribbin, Tom Wright, Bob Watkin, Tyler Levacque, Darrin Leblanc and Francis Henne. An eighth contestant, Shawn Robson, stepped out of the competition due to a scheduling conflict.

When all was said and done, Sean Cribbin (representing Woody's Priape bar) emerged with the title, the sash and the glory. Cameron Lewis was the 1st runner-up and was also named Mr. Leather Fellowship 2005. Mr. Cribbin advances to compete at IML 2005 next May.

The winner of The Bootblack Toronto contest, open to men and women, was Ron "cub" Tummon, who was no mere shoe-in.

It was a grand and glorious leather weekend as always happens in Toronto. Thanks Remi, for

a great year with the title.

Bulletin from Pittsburgh

They held a leather contest at the Pittsburgh Eagle on Saturday, November 20th and the Three Rivers Leather Club imported Jon Kronegaard from Chicago to emcee the proceedings. The details are sketchy but when it was all said and done, Bryce Caine received the sash from last year's winner (Mike Natale) and advances to compete at IML 2005. Alan Deutsch was the 1st runner-up and Lloyd Miller was the 2nd runner-up. IML Coordinator Bill Stadt was in attendance and according to reliable sources, a good time was had by all.

Apologies

Last week, in this column on www.LeatherPage.com, there appeared a photo of the new Mr. Florida Leather displayed as Will

next page ►



It was Triumph in Toronto for Sean Cribbin, center the new Mr. Leatherman Toronto 2005; he shared the glory with Leather Fellowship winner Cameron Lewis, left, the 1st runner-up, and Ron "cub" Tummon, Toronto Bootblack 2005. It all happened last Saturday, November 27.

EVENTURES IN LEATHER

Weekend, December 3-4

SW Leather Conference in Phoenix featuring US Daddy/boy contests and 3rd annual SW Master/slave and SW Bootblack contests. For details and more info: www.leatherboyaz@msn.com.

Friday, December 3

Leather night at Renegades Bar in San Jose where the "Brotherhood" gathers; uniforms are acceptable too.

Saturday, December 4

Don Ho and Omar's annual Xmas Party is by invitation only but it'll cost you a \$25 donation to benefit the AIDS Emergency Fund.

SF Leather Daddy Doug Mezzacappa birthday party at the Edge from 1600 to 1900 and requesting an unwrapped toy for Mama's Toy Drive.

Alameda County Leather Corps annual Santa's Slave Auction at the Turf Club in Hayward at 1900 MC'd by Lenny Broberg and Trashy Trixie. If you need more info, click on: www.acleather.org.

Sunday, December 5

Annual Holiday Leather Brunch at Harvey's from 1100 to 1300 with a \$20 donation in advance

or \$25 at the door to benefit Positive Resources Center; entertainment, awarding unsung heroes, fabulous brunch.

Mr. Edge Todd Kinard's farewell benefit for the AEF at the Edge from 1400 to 1800 with a beer/soda bust. No other details furnished.

The Leather Forum of SF annual Xmas Party by invitation only at the SF Citadel with admission by invitation in hand or your club overlay from 1800 to 2100.

Opening Night of Donna Sachet's "Songs of the Season" show at the Empire Plush Room. The tickets are \$50 for each night, both with star-studded entertainment. For information, click on www.donnasachet.com.

Monday, December 6

2nd night of Donna Sachet's "Songs of the Season" show at the Plush Room tonight featuring Kim Kuzma and Sharon McNight. Don't miss this one!

Saturday, December 11

Carl Hack and Jeff Mauk's "Raising Colors" party/benefit for the rainbow flag poles on Market Street. Their goal is \$25,000 to maintain those flags.

Donna does Marlena's

by Sweet Lips

First off, thanks to everyone who helped me celebrate my 82nd birthday at Ginger's Trois last Sunday! I was so glad to see so many friends still around.

For Sale at Marlena's Basement this Saturday, December 4 at 8 p.m.: royal goodies galore! You'll find jewelry, handbags and shoes from Empress 24 Pat Montclair's estate. Grab these precious collectors' items before they're lost to history!

Speaking of Marlena's, the 40th Anniversary Celebration will take place there on December 18, hosted by the fabulous Donna Sachet! This should be a spectacular event, so don't miss it!

Hope you all had a very pleasant Thanksgiving, as I did with my good friend Steve Rasher. We hit a few bars, at least the ones that

were open. I didn't realize how many bars closed for the holiday! We ended up at Aunt Charlie's Lounge, with the very pleasant José behind the bar.

Yes, the Gangway is still going strong, with a lot of familiar faces. Did you know that David Hamilton — "Mame" — will be 70 years young on January First? Steve Suss of the Embers in Portland will be doing a biggie for Mame. Incidentally, Steve, did you realize this birthday means it's 32 years that we have been friends?

Spent some time with Jim Welsh at the Twin Peaks, and the very personable George was on the planks. The bar looks great, with pretty flower arrangements and all the regulars. It was like old times!

Well, the 'N Touch still hasn't opened their new rooms. What gives? Hope it happens soon, as the crowd there needs more room to roam about.

In my next column, I should have all the dirt on the Club Rendez-Vous — whether it will be open or closed, or at a new location. But David is planning a great New Year's Eve Party no matter what is ahead. So make your plans early with Little Mickey.

Happy Holidays to all my faithful readers! I hope you are looking ahead and getting ready for the special New Year's Eve Parties that the bars have. I understand that some of the Royal Family now residing in Palm Springs will be here for the High Holidays. It will be nice to see them again. ▼

Cocktail Hour



Mister Marcus

◀ previous page

Costello which is/was incorrect. Mr. Florida Leather is Will CASTILLO. Apologies to all concerned.

The Burning

There was much jubilation around the tribe last August when the mortgage for the Leather Archives & Museum reached the goal to make the museum ours alone. A symbolic "burning of the mortgage" ceremony will be held at the museum itself on Sunday, February 20, 2005. That's the weekend of the Mr. Cell Block Leather contest and the Pantheon of Leather Awards ceremony. Details can be found here if Rick Storer ever sends me a detailed press release.

For more info click on: www.leatherarchives.org.

2005's First Big Event

Big leather weekends and/or competitions are pretty much over for 2004. But in January 2005, it begins all over again with the Centaur MC's annual Leather Cocktails weekend in Washington, DC. Due to the presidential inauguration ceremonies, the weekend will take place January 14-16. The host hotel, The Washington Plaza Hotel, was sold out months ago, but there are three or four other hotels within one block of the host hotel. Hordes of people are making plans/reservations already and the airfares are decent right now. Mr. Mid-Atlantic Leather 2004 will pass the sash that weekend, so make your plans now. Remember, it's Martin Luther King holiday weekend, so don't delay making travel plans. For complete information, surf to: www.LeatherWeekend.com. You might want to know the \$109 fee is good only until January 1, 2005; it's \$125 between January 1-11; Walk-in registration is \$140.

T-shirts are \$15, which can be ordered with your tickets.

Edge's Todd Kinard bids SF farewell

Mr. Edge Leather Todd Kinard explains that "due to circumstances beyond his control" he is moving back home to Texas on December 10. His "swan song" event will take place at the Edge on Sunday afternoon, December 5 from 1400 to 1800, a benefit for the AEF. It's conveniently taking



The 16th Annual Leather Daddy and Daddy's boy of Seattle, Scott Morgan (left) and Seattle Leather boy Darian Hawke savored victory last Saturday, November 27 at the Cuff Complex in Seattle.

place between the Holiday Leather Brunch and Donna Sachet's "Songs of the Season" show at the Empire Plush Room that night.

Daddies & boys in Seattle

Last Saturday night, November 27, the Seattle Men in Leather staged their 16th annual Seattle Leather Daddy and boy contest at the newly remodeled Cuff Complex. Leather people from Atlanta to Anchorage were there to see Tom Orr ("Dirty Little Showtunes") MC the event. When all

the votes were counted, Scott Morgan of Tacoma, WA was named Seattle Leather Daddy 2005 and Darian Hawke of Seattle was chosen Seattle Leather boy 2005. Outgoing Seattle Leather Daddy 2004 Jim Drew will compete for the American Leather Man 2005 title in Washington, DC next April.

The holiday madness is just around the corner. Try to support as many of them as your wallet allows. Know one thing: you can't make them all. Have a great weekend. ▼



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De-lightful chatting with Ashley Judd

'De-Lovely' is already out on DVD, with loads of extras

by Gregg Shapiro

Watching Ashley Judd's *De-Lovely* portrayal of Linda Lee Porter, the devoted but long-suffering wife of Cole Porter, I became a fan in a way that I hadn't been before. The part really gives Judd an opportunity to show off her acting skills, both lightly comedic and seriously dramatic. She even croons a Cole Porter tune. The *De-Lovely* DVD, to be released shortly before Christmas, features audio commentary by actor Kevin Kline, director Irwin Winkler and writer Jay Cocks, as well as a *Music of De-Lovely* featurette and much more. I had the opportunity to sit down with the personable Judd at the Four Seasons Hotel in Chicago for an interview.

Gregg Shapiro: Besides *De-Lovely*, you also appeared in *Frida*, an

other biopic. What attracts you to that kind of movie?

Ashley Judd: Well, *Frida* I did because my friend asked me to; it was a joy. When I read the script for *De-Lovely*, I thought it would be such a relief and so much fun to play someone really rich, and have all those great locations, all that pretty stuff, all those pretty clothes!

Linda Porter was an amazing woman in many ways, not the least of which was her open-mindedness concerning Cole's pursuit of, as he put it, "every kind of love that was available."

I think that Linda and Cole had a very profound and sustaining, very nurturing marriage. I don't think people are married for 35 years by accident. It's an interesting, unconventional love story that's compelling to contemporary audiences. I think there's a very important place for sex in a

relationship, but I think to a certain extent it's overemphasized and overrated. Cole and Linda shared an authentic meeting, in the Jungian sense, with another human being.

People seeing the movie will have the opportunity to hear you sing.

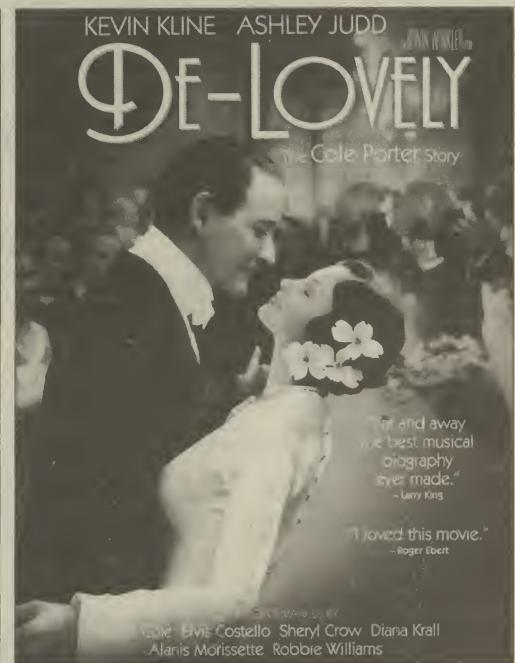
I have a healthy enough ego to have thought when I read the script, "No problem. This will be easy." I worked on it a little bit with a young friend who is a producer in Nashville. He was playing scales, and I was singing with him. He kept going further down the keyboard and dropping his jaw, because I have such a low voice. He really tried to persuade me to sing "True Love" in Bing Crosby's key, which is really where I am more comfortable. I don't like to go up high. I ended up doing what the producer and music supervisor on *De-Lovely* wanted. I think it turned out OK, but it's not nearly as good as it could have been.

Contemporary singers like Robbie Williams, Elvis Costello, Sheryl Crow, Alanis Morissette and Diana Krall appear in the film, singing Porter's songs. Had you met any of them previously?

I knew Sheryl. I had met Alanis on something, but I can't remember what. She's just a really great, down-to-earth Canadian woman. I get along really well with Canadians, partly because my husband is Scottish and there are so many Scottish people in Canada. There are big open-wheel motor-sport fans in Canada, plus we share a lot of the same political views. It was so great to meet Robbie, because my husband is a devoted fan. I think he does one of the best jobs in the movie.

Were you always a fan of Cole Porter's music?

I was a big fan of Cole Porter's music. I don't think I knew the extent to which he made a contribution to American music. People will be so surprised, when they hear all these songs, that they were written by the same brilliantly talented individual. I probably thought that "You're the Top" was written by Gershwin, and I probably thought that some of them were by Johnny Mercer or Irving Berlin.



I was surprised to learn that he wrote "Be a Clown."

I hadn't realized he wrote "Don't Fence Me In." The man literally filled trunks with his music. You get to age in the film and do a very emotional deathbed scene. Did you enjoy doing that scene?

I had an ice-cream cone on my stomach that I was trying to eat right before we did our take. With the prosthetic makeup, I wasn't allowed to chew. It would start to crack and peel off, and once that started to happen, it was an irretrievable mess. The makeup took four to six hours to do. I have low blood-sugar and have to eat every two hours. I had somebody smuggle me a Dove bar, because I thought I could just get it in there and eat my ice cream. The producer took it away from me. It's kind of a legendary story among my friends, because the scene did turn out so beautifully. I didn't know how to play it. I just knew what I didn't want it to be: all trembly, how deathbed scenes often are!

It was very controlled and very touching.

It was written in a very lucid style. What passes between Linda and Cole in this review of their extraordinary, peripatetic lives — I really wanted to keep that intact. Plus, they were nothing if not fundamentally considerate and polite. Really, that's all that good manners are. Good manners is being considerate. Just think of what is the most compassionate, thoughtful, considerate thing to do, and it will equal having good manners. When, as Linda in the deathbed scene, I say, "Do you mind if I leave a little early?" I just thought that was a wonderful line. Like, basically, I'm so sorry that I may have to leave a little early. I thought that was the most poignant, beautiful exit line.

Linda says, after watching the 1946 Porter biopic *Night and Day*, "Hollywood found a happy ending for Cole and Linda." Do you believe in happy endings?

Sure, absolutely. ▼

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GHETTO

Hits parade

by Gregg Shapiro

I was beginning to wonder when a compilation such as *Polaroids: A Greatest Hits Collection* (Columbia) would be coming out to sum up the first 15 years of Shawn Colvin's incredible career. The 15 tracks (including a cover of Lennon & McCartney's "I'll Be Back") are a modest summation of an artist who is so much more than her hits. Colvin's one certifiable hit, "Sunny Came Home," finally gave FM radio listeners and VH1 viewers a chance to experience what her devoted fans had been enjoying. But a single disc can't begin to reveal Colvin's many layers, and listeners owe it to themselves to seek out her numerous movie soundtrack-only recordings, or her holiday music CD, not to mention her concert renditions of *Crowded House* tunes.

The 17 tracks on *Greatest Hits: My Prerogative* (Jive/Zomba) say as much about Britney Spears as they do about the current state of the music industry. Even with the demise of the 7-inch single, Spears spewed inconsequential hit singles at an impressive rate. The songs, many of which were written by committee ("Toxic") and new cut ("I've Just Begun") or sound like Abba cast-offs ("Crazy," "Baby One More Time") gave the pre-fab Disney doll something to wrap her lips around while she focused on her dance moves and abdominal muscles. By the time she hooked up with Chad Hugo and Pharrell Williams of The Neptunes on her third album, she was already a superstar. She was able to lock lips in synch with Madonna, the godmother of bad pop divas, and get "Outrageous" with the notorious R. Kelly. Dance-music addicts will be pleased with the five-track limited edition bonus remix disc.

Mandy Moore exhibited her superior taste in cover material with 2003's *Coverage*, on which she tackled XTC, The Waterboys, Carole King, Elton John, Carly Simon, Joan Armatrading and Joni Mitchell. Four of those songs can be found on *The Best of Mandy Moore* (Epic). Moore grows from being a Britney competitor ("Candy") to a Janet Jackson imitator ("Walk Me Home") to becoming her own person ("Crush").

Say olé

Matador Records' *Greatest Hits 1999-2004*, disc one of *Matador at Fifteen*, includes Interpol ("Obstacle 1"), The New Pornographers ("The Laws Have Changed"), Cat Power ("Free"), Guided By Voices ("My Kind of Soldier"), Yo La Tengo ("Don't Have To Be So Sad"), Belle and Sebastian ("Don't Leave the Light on, Baby"), and even queer acts such as Matmos ("For the Trees") and Thalia Zedek ("1926"). The second disc of unreleased tracks and rarities is better than what passes for hits on most collections. If all this simply isn't enough, say olé to a 12-video DVD featuring Mogwai, Pavement, Mary Timony, Stephen

Malkmus and others.

Grunge groundbreakers Pearl Jam present the 33 tracks on their double-disc set *Rearviewmirror (Greatest Hits 1991-2003)* (Epic) in album-release order, but they are also split into *Up Side* and *Down Side* discs. This thoughtful collection keeps in mind that not everyone was a fan of PJ's particular brand of scream-o tunes, and separates them from the band's more mellow selections, such as "Elderly Woman Behind the Counter in a Small Town."

Pearl Jam's fellow Seattle grunge-gods Nirvana are also given the career-retrospective treatment with the massive four-disc set *With the Lights Out* (DGC). Jam-packed with early recordings, demos, rehearsals, rough, acoustic, and live performances, the set is a seriously unrelenting blast of raging vocals and guitar/bass/drums noise that evolved into one of the sounds that defined the '90s.

Few hits collections are as straightforward as *Singles* (Epic) by underappreciated Glaswegian quartet Travis. The 18 singles, some of which received airplay and attention in the States, remind us of Travis' undeniable pop chops. Travis really came into their own on their second album, *The Man Who*, and ran with it on their third disc *The Invisible Man*.

I first got turned on to songwriter and singer Rodney Crowell when he was married to one of my favorite musicians, Rosanne Cash. After learning about his work with Emmylou Harris and Mary Kay Place, my respect for Crowell increased. But it was with 2001's *The Houston Kid*, which contained the song "Wandering Boy," about two brothers, one of whom was gay, that Crowell earned my complete respect. *The Essential Rodney Crowell* (Columbia/Legacy) does what it can to provide an overview of Crowell's prolific Columbia years, and also looks back at his Warner Brothers period, as well as his work for Sugar Hill. The disc also includes two 2004 re-recordings of the songs "I Ain't Living Long Like This" and "Til I Gain Control Again."

Almost as well-known for his trumpet playing and his nearly inescapable '78 hit single "Feels So Good" as he was for his fedora, trumpeter Chuck Mangione spent time with the Columbia Records family after his A&M tenure, and *The Best of Chuck Mangione* (Columbia/Legacy) collects 10 tracks from that period.

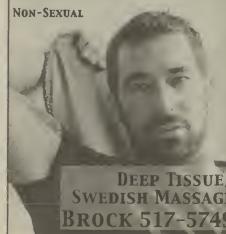
Saxophonist Wayne Shorter has been a key figure on the contemporary jazz scene for more than 40 years. In addition to playing with such jazz legends as Art Blakey and Miles Davis, Shorter went on to co-found the jazz-fusion unit Weather Report, and performed with Brazilian superstar Milton Nascimento. His guest appearances on discs by Steely Dan and Joni Mitchell are so highly regarded that tracks from those collaborations have been included on Shorter's own double-disc anthology *Footprints: The Life and Music of Wayne Shorter* (Columbia/Legacy). ▼

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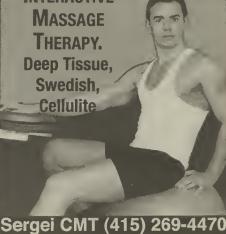
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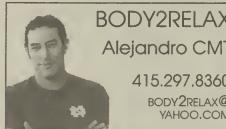
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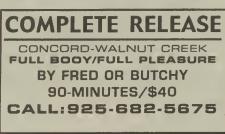
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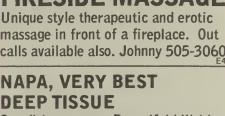


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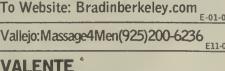
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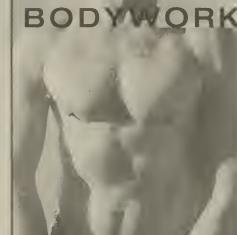
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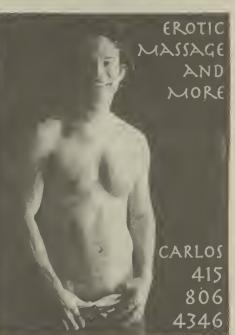
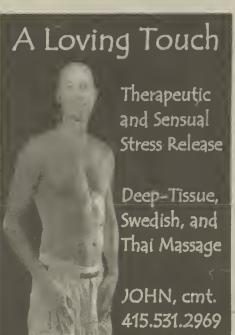
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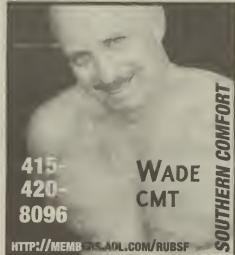
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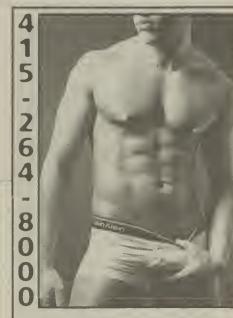
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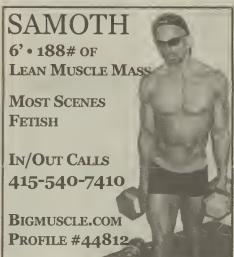
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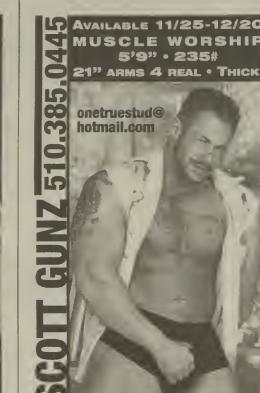
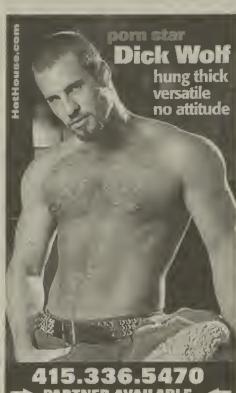
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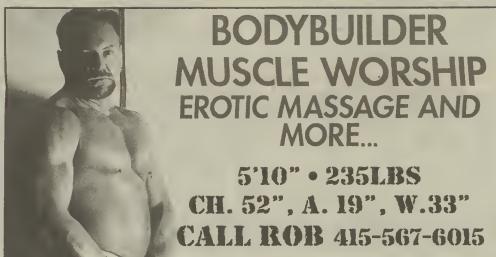
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SEEKING RELATIONSHIP

Single An Available To Love

Handsome Latino, Brazilian. 142 lbs, 5'7", 38yo. Endowed to make you happy. Clean, financially stable. Fun. Looking for guys under 40. WGM only. **71439**

48 GWM Sacramento Seek ??

5'11", 200lbs. Looking for?? Friend or more. I'm sincere, honest, caring and friendly. Lots of different interest. Like white and latin guys 26 to 42. Take a chance! **71429**

Nothing Ventured Nothing Gained

55yo GWM 5'9" 150lbs. Versatile, good looking. Down to earth. Healthy long term survivor. Looking for same! Long hair, NS, Aroma ok, lite alcohol. **71430**

Tall Handsome Animal Lover

Thoughtful, passionate, playful, easygoing, honest, sincere, romantic homebody. Seeks similar 35-60 home owner for monogamous. Peaceful LTR 6'2", 190lbs, mustache/goatee, shaved head, sexy, honest. Love nature, hiking, plants, foreplay. **71431**

Single White Male 25, 5'11", 180lbs, blue eyes, brown hair with a nice muscular body. Looking for love or companionship with loving person. Talk to you soon. **71432**

GWM 5'9" 130 Good Shape 22yrs
Clean. Looking for GWM mid 50's good shape looking for affectionate relationship. No smoking. I'm responding to the Asian 71370. **71421**

Seek Slim Asian Freind or LTR
Caring WGM, young looking for 50, 6'1", 176lbs, blue eyes, HIV+, professional seeks 50s. Asian 18-38. Plus if foreign born. Enjoy cuddling, movies, massage, body contact, exercise, dining. **71422**

PARTING GLANCES

Ruddy Jonathan with Nose Ring
Powell Street 10/14, we saw each other once again. Thought you disappeared. Have had a crush on you for ages. Wanna hang out sometime? Would like to know more than just your name Lar. **71420**

Tues 11-9@ 18th & Castro Busstop
8:20 pm you asked how long I was waiting, we had lots of "Flirty" smiles. Regret not giving you my phone number before you caught the 24. You're handsome with a great smile. **71434**

RPCV Western Samoa
Find your Fale at "Out of the Closet" on Church. Lets Talk. **71438**

SEEKING ADVENTURE

Younger/Older GW Sex Buddies
Seeking others for casual, hot get-togethers in South Santa Cruz County. All races welcome. Must be 18-26, fit, healthy. We are 50 and 24, healthy, versatile. Let's play! **71441**

Black Mature 45 Visiting SF
Versatile oral bottom. Sucks, rim, clean ass, dominated, submissive. Versatile in all. One on One, group, three wall. All races, men of color a+. **71440**

Hispanic ISO GWM
Me: 5'6", 54, 143lbs. Enjoy running, gym, travel, politics, pro sports, films, theater, classic rock. You: 35-70 into oral, cuddling, kissing, tits, pits, barefoot and others. **71436**

Deep Long Full Body Nude
wanted by attractive in shape Asian male from experienced hours. I enjoy head to toe massage on every inch of my nude body. I am available anytime. **71433**

Black Top, Huge Cock
Seeks Bubble butt. Latino bottom. Be very cute and female. I love to fuck a long time. Call me Papi. **71425**

LESBIAN

East Bay Artist/Editor
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BAR TALK

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